

HADITH

What, Why, and When

**THIS IS A SHORT VERSION OF THE BOOK
(JUST OVER 1/3). THE FULL BOOK IS
AVAILABLE ON AMAZON**

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Preface

Hadiths are very important. A hadith is a report of a statement or action of the Prophet Muhammad or a report of something said or done in his presence such that he gave it approval. Initially they were memorised and transmitted by word of mouth.

For Muslims it is vital to know how the Prophet behaved and what he approved. The Quran's guidance on what to do, how to behave, what rules to follow, is a very small part of the Quran and hadiths play a great part in determining Islamic law and behaviour.

The book explains the origins and nature of hadiths, what they cover, and how they are organised. It covers what Islamic scholars have said and done about their origins and use and the views and research of modern western scholars.

Did the Prophet say?

Whoever establishes prayers during the nights of Ramadan out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allah's rewards (not for showing off), then all his past sins will be forgiven.

Whoever obeys me, obeys Allah, and whoever disobeys me, disobeys Allah, and whoever obeys the ruler I appoint, obeys me, and whoever disobeys him, disobeys me.

The one who looks after and works for a widow and for a poor person, is like a warrior fighting for Allah's Cause or like a person who fasts during the day and prays all the night.

.... When the Prophet heard the news that the people of the Persia had made the daughter of Khosrau their Queen (ruler), he said, "Never will succeed such a nation as makes a woman their ruler."

.... Then he passed by the women and said, "O women! Give alms, as I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hell-fire were you." They asked, "Why is it so, O Allah's Messenger?" He replied, "You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you".

I have been commanded to fight against people, till they testify to the fact that there is no god but Allah, and believe in me (that) I am the messenger (from the Lord) and in all that I have brought. And when they do it, their blood and riches are guaranteed protection on my behalf except where it is justified by law, and their affairs rest with Allah.

The blood of a Muslim who confesses that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that I am His Apostle, cannot be shed except in three cases: In Qisas for murder, a married person who commits illegal sexual intercourse and the one who reverts from Islam (apostate) and leaves the Muslims.

The hand should be cut off for stealing something that is worth a quarter of a Dinar or more.

The Prophet entered upon me while there was a curtain having pictures (of animals) in the house. His face got red with anger, and then he got hold of the curtain and tore it into pieces. The Prophet said, "Such people as paint these pictures will receive the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection".

Whoever keeps a (pet) dog which is neither a watch dog nor a hunting dog, will get a daily deduction of two Qirat from his good deeds.

[It is estimated that there are nearly 10,000 hadiths]

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The contents of the book are, of course, entirely the responsibility of the author.

Dates

All dates are AH, "After Hijra", the number of Islamic lunar years after Muhammad and his followers migrated from Mecca to Yathrib (now Medina), except for dates for modern scholars and their works which are CE "Current Era". The Hijra occurred in 622 CE. An Islamic lunar year is 354 or 355 days.

Hadith

The word "hadith" is also a collective noun, meaning all hadiths. It is used in this way in the title of the book.

PART 1

THE BASICS

Chapter 1 - What Are Hadiths?

A hadith is a report of a statement or action of the Prophet Muhammad or a report of something said or done in his presence such that he gave it approval.

Hadiths have two parts: the *matn*, the words of the report itself; and the *isnad*, a chain of transmitters who passed it verbally from the original witness of what the Prophet said or did to the scholar teaching it or who finally wrote it down in a hadith collection. For nearly 200 years from the time of the Prophet hadiths were mainly transmitted orally. The degree to which written recording and transmission took place is a contentious subject and covered in more detail below.

An *isnad* may take the following form, for example; the compiler of a hadith collection writes in his collection that he heard from person A who heard from B, who heard from C, who heard from D, who heard from E, who heard F, a Companion of the Prophet, narrate that he heard the Prophet say such and such or saw him do so and so. A, B, C, D, E, F, are the transmitters (*muhaddiths*). By the time written collections were established *isnads* typically had a chain of six or seven transmitters.

The *Sunna* of the Prophet

Hadiths provide the *Sunna* of the Prophet; his example of righteous behaviour and his guidance on how to behave. This information is of the utmost importance to Muslims. The Quran calls upon Muslims to follow the example and instructions of the Prophet:

O you who believe! Obey God and obey the Messenger and those among you with authority; but if you have a dispute concerning some matter, refer it to God and the Messenger if you are (truly) believers in God and the Day of Judgment. [Q4:59] and

In God's messenger you have a fine model for anyone whose hope is in God and the Last Day. [Q33:21].

Muslims believe God was guiding Muhammad in acting the way he did. For Muslims it is vital to know how the Prophet behaved and what he approved. The Quran does not give this information.

The Quran's guidance on what to do, how to behave, what rules to follow, is a very small part of the Quran. There are only a few hundred verses about Islamic prayer and ritual and even fewer dealing with crime and punishment. The Quran talks about prayer but it is the Prophet's example that provides the details such as the five times a day ritual prayer. Thus hadiths reporting what Muhammad said and did became the foundation and source of Islamic law along with the Quran.

Understanding the Quran and the Life of Muhammad

The Quran also in many parts is difficult to understand. The meaning is not clear and there are contradictions. Consequently, Muslim scholars from early times have produced commentaries (*tafsirs*) to explain the meaning. Hadiths were an invaluable source, the only source, to provide the background to Quranic revelations - what was the Prophet doing or saying when the revelation was given, what were the circumstances, for example - and to enable scholars to say what was meant and to resolve contradictions. Hadiths have been equally important in the writing of biographies of Muhammad as again they are the major source.

The Canonical Collections

Amongst the earliest written collections of hadiths there are six that achieved canonical status among Sunni Muslims. The two most famous are *Sahih* al-Bukhari and *Sahih* Muslim and they are regarded as genuine Islamic sacred books by Sunni Muslims. The six are discussed in greater detail below.

Scope and Terminology

As well as reports of what the Prophet said or did there are reports of the sayings and doings of his Companions and even of Successors to the Companions. These are also counted as hadiths

and included in hadith collections. Some scholars take the view the words and deeds of the Companions must have been modelled on those of the Prophet.

Hadith Topics and Examples

Hadiths cover all aspects of life in the Middle East in late antiquity. They touch on everything from fundamental questions concerning human existence, the afterlife, and how to pray, to how to put on your shoes and what to do when you sneeze.

ANNEX 1 lists all 97 topics with the number of hadiths in each topic covered in *Sahih* al-Bukhari, one the most famous hadith collections. If closely related topics in this collection are added together the largest broader categories are:

- Religious Instruction and Knowledge (24% of all hadiths)
- Prayer (12%)
- Military Campaigns and Jihad (12%)
- Family Life and Law (7%)
- Pilgrimage and Festivals (6%)
- Others (39%)

Such a range of subjects and a very large number of hadiths (circa. 10,000), makes it difficult to select a sample, but it is done here at the beginning, otherwise everything will sound theoretical without examples. Only the text of the report (the *matn*) is given.

This is what the Prophet said, did, or approved. The information in brackets gives the collection in which the hadith is found and two further references to locate it. The first reference is used in printed publications and sometimes on the web. The second is widely used on the web.

Prayer, Belief, Signs

While the people were offering the Fajr prayer at Quba (near Medina), someone came to them and said: "It has been revealed to Allah's

Messenger tonight, and he has been ordered to pray facing the Kaba." So turn your faces to the Kaba. Those people were facing Sham (Jerusalem) so they turned their faces towards the Kaba (at Mecca). [al-Bukhari, Book 8, Hadith 55 / Book 8, Hadith 397]

Doing Good

None of you will have faith till he wishes for his (Muslim) brother what he likes for himself.

[al-Bukhari, Book 2, Hadith 6 / Book 2, Hadith 12]

Concerning Women

The Prophet said: "I was shown the Hell-fire and that the majority of its dwellers were women who were ungrateful." It was asked, "Do they disbelieve in Allah?" (or are they ungrateful to Allah?) He replied, "They are ungrateful to their husbands and are ungrateful for the favors and the good (charitable deeds) done to them. If you have always been good (benevolent) to one of them and then she sees something in you (not of her liking), she will say, 'I have never received any good from you'". [al-Bukhari, Book 2, Hadith 22 / Book 2, Hadith 28]

Jihad

A man came to the Prophet and asked, "O Allah's Messenger! What kind of fighting is in Allah's cause? (I ask this), for some of us fight because of being enraged and angry and some for the sake of his pride and haughtiness." The Prophet raised his head (as the questioner was standing) and said, "He who fights so that Allah's Word (Islam) should be superior, then he fights in Allah's cause."

[al-Bukhari, Book 3, Hadith 65 / Book 3, Hadith 125]

Apostasy

A man embraced Islam and then reverted back to Judaism. Muadh bin Jabal came and saw the man with Abu Musa. Muadh asked, "What is wrong with this (man)?" Abu Musa replied, "He embraced Islam and then reverted back to Judaism." Muadh said, "I will not sit down unless you kill him (as it is) the verdict of Allah and His Apostle". [al-Bukhari, Book 93, Hadith 21 / Book 89, Hadith 271]

Punishment

Whomever you find doing the actions of the people of Lut then kill the one doing it, and the one it is done to. [al-Tirmidhi, Book 17, Hadith 40 / Book 15, Hadith 1456]

Personal Behaviour

If you want to put on your shoes, put on the right shoe first; and if you want to take them off, take the left one first. Let the right shoe be the first to be put on and the last to be taken off. [al-Bukhari, Book 77, Hadith 72 / Book 72, Hadith 747]

Size of Hadiths

The above hadiths are short having only 52 words per hadith. Hadiths in general have an average size of about 94 words per hadith.[3] There are many hadiths that have a thousand words or so, that is about two pages of A4 and are like short stories.

[ANNEX 2 gives a larger selection of hadiths on the above topics and links to websites that provide access to the well-known hadith collections]

Chapter 2

- Origins, Transmission, and Recording of Hadiths - What and How

Formal Collection and Writing of Hadiths

It was nearly a century after the Prophet's death before the official collection and writing down of hadiths finally happened. It was ordered by the Umayyad caliph Umar II (63-101). His motives are variously given as a desire to preserve hadiths so they might not be lost and the desire to support government with the collection of hadiths concerning administrative and tax matters. [5] There are no surviving copies of what resulted from his initiative.

Musannafs

The earliest surviving documents involving the organised recording of hadiths are in the form of scholarly *musannafs*. *Musannafs* are reference books created by Muslim scholars that answered a range of Islamic legal and ritual questions, such as how to pray and how to divide inheritances.

They are organised by topic and include mainly reports of the actions and beliefs of Companions and Successors, the opinions of Muslim scholars, and the views of the *musannaf* author himself. Prophetic reports are in the minority. They provide a record of Islamic legal practice and thinking as it had developed over the first hundred years or so of Islam.

One of the earliest surviving *musannafs* is the *Muwatta'* of Malik ibn Anas (93-179) which contains 1720 reports of which 527 are Prophetic hadiths. *Muwatta'* means "well trodden, agreed path". Other surviving *musannafs* are the works of Abd al-Razzaq (126-211), Abu Yusuf (d. 182), and Ibn Abi Shayba (156-235).

Musnads

Another early type of hadith collection book is the *musnad*. These collections concentrate on Prophetic hadiths listing those narrated by individual Companions, and can cover all Companions, a number, or just one. Companions with their hadiths are sometimes listed alphabetically but mostly according to the status and prestige of the Companion. This organisation by narrators is useful for analysis but not for locating hadiths on particular topics.

Musnads were part of a trend that made Prophetic hadiths supreme. A leading scholar driving this trend was al-Shafi'i (150-204). He had been a student of Malik ibn Anas and believed only hadiths of the Prophet himself could serve as the source of law alongside the Quran, and they should replace ancient community *sunan* (the plural of *sunna*), still followed in the different parts of the expanding Islamic empire, and the opinions of scholars in the developing regional schools of legal practice.

Hadiths of the Prophet himself now became the overriding focus of hadith research and collections. Collectors concentrated on gathering all the hadiths they could find. They didn't pay particular attention to the strength or weakness of the transmission chains from the Companion, though the interest in *isnads* that went back to the Prophet represented the first steps in the standard transmitter evaluation and *isnad* criticism that later became so important.

The best known *musnad* was produced by Ibn Hanbal (164-241). It contains about 27,000 hadiths including repetitions. He admitted his collection included weak hadiths - the reported words or actions might not be those of the Prophet himself - but he is reported to have said regarding the Prophet's *Sunna* all hadiths deserved consideration. The earliest known surviving *musnad* is by Abu Dawud al-Tayalisi (133-204).

Sunans

Another form of hadith collection soon emerged, the *sunan*. *Sunans* were similar to *musannafs*, designed to be used as legal references and organised by topic, but they used only Prophetic hadiths with

complete *isnads*. The authors of such books also sought to use what they believed to be authentic hadiths, those with convincing *isnads*, or because they had wide support amongst scholars. Two known and very early *sunans* are those of al-Khurasani (d. 227) and al-Darimi (181-255).

The methods developed by early hadith scholars to determine hadith authenticity - was a hadith genuinely from the Prophet or was it fabricated in some way - are discussed in Chapter 4.

The Canonical Collections

The increased interest in Prophetic hadiths and in knowing if they were genuine finally led to the six canonical collections. The first two listed in Table 4, al-Bukhari and Muslim, were the first hadith collections in which all the hadiths included met certain authenticity requirements.

Table 4 - The Six Canonical Collections	
The Six Canonical Collections	Lifetime (AH) of Collector
Sahih al-Bukhari	194-256
Sahih Muslim	204-261
Sunan Abu Dawud	202-275
Jami' al-Tirmidhi	209-279
Sunan al-Nasa'i	224-303
Sunan Ibn Majah	209-273

These two collections also became the most famous and are known as the *Sahihan*, "the two *Sahihs*" (*sahih* means authentic). Of the two, al-Bukhari is considered the most authoritative and it provides legal commentary whereas Muslim is considered better organised and easier to use. *Sahih* al-Bukhari is considered the second most important Islamic text after the Quran.

The other canonical collections also concentrated on hadiths believed to be reliable because of the quality of their *isnads*, but hadiths were included if they were already widely accepted by jurists or if they were on topics where no fully authenticated hadith could be found. [The next Chapter gives more information on all these collections]

Based on the lifetimes of the collectors all the canonical collections were put together most likely in the period 220-270 AH, with al-Bukhari and Muslim, the *Sahihan*, becoming available in 245-255 AH, over 200 years after the death of the Prophet. It was nearly another 200 years before they achieved canonical status.

Chapter 3 - Hadith Numbers and Collections

How many hadiths are there? A simple question but there is no simple answer. There is no agreed convention on how to count hadiths. There are several problems.

A particular Prophetic action or statement can have different transmission chains (*isnads*). This can be counted as one hadith or as separate hadiths for each *isnad*. The text (*matn*) of a Prophetic action or statement can have minor or major variations in the text and can be counted as a single hadith or as separate hadiths for each text version. There is also scope for disagreement over whether a text difference makes a new hadith or not.

Hadiths also have an authenticity classification based on the soundness of the *isnad*, indicating if the words and deeds are likely to really go back to the Prophet: *sahih* (sound); *hasan* (fair); and *da'if* (weak), and whether or not a count includes all categories is not always clear. Hadith collectors also differed in their judgements of what made an *isnad* sound.

Reports of the sayings and actions of Companions and even Successors are part of many hadith collections and are included in the numbers making hadith counting even more confusing.

If all types of hadiths and all the different chains and text versions are counted the number of hadiths runs into hundreds of thousands. If the variations are ignored the total number of distinct Prophetic hadiths is believed to be nearly 10,000. Some sources give lower numbers, 4000 to 5000.[1]

The Canonical Collections

Though overall counting is difficult, examining the number of hadiths in each of these collections helps give an idea of the size of the hadith corpus.

In addition to the counting problems mentioned above, the publishing and editing process over the years introduced

differences, different editions of the same work having different numbers.

Table 5 below shows the most frequently quoted hadith counts for the canonical collections found in the literature and on the web.

Table 5 – Estimates for the Number of Hadiths in the Canonical Collections		
Collection	Number of Hadiths	Less Repetitions
Sahih al-Bukhari	7563 or 7397 or 7275	3397 or 2602 or 2230 or 2134
Sahih Muslim	12000 or 9200 or 7190	4000 or 3033 or 2200
Sunan Abu Dawud	5274 or 4800	
Jami' al-Tirmidhi	3956	
Sunan al-Nasa'i	5769 or 5750 or 5270	
Sunan Ibn Majah	4485 or 4397	

Ignoring repetitions and allowing for overlap there are about 9500 different hadiths in the six books.

Chapter 4 - Hadith Authenticity

Scale of Fabrication and the Reasons for It

Hadith fabrication occurred during the Prophet's lifetime. There is even a hadith *"Whoever lies about me intentionally, let him prepare for himself a seat in Hellfire"*[1] and after his death the problem grew. By the end of the second century (150-200) the number of hadith reports had mushroomed and fabricated and authentic hadiths were thoroughly mixed together. There were several major causes for the enormous growth of fabrications.

Civil Wars and Conflicts

The first Muslim civil war (36-41) that saw Ali, the fourth and last of the rightly-guided caliphs, deposed and the governor of Syria, Mu'awiya, the founder of the Umayyad dynasty, become caliph was one of them. Both sides invented hadiths to bolster their position or win support.

Ali's supporters fabricated a hadith claiming the Prophet said *"If you see Mu'awiya ascend my pulpit, then kill him."*[2] Mu'awiya's followers produced hadiths supporting him and against Ali. Hadiths appeared praising the first three caliphs seen as usurpers by Ali's supporters. The Umayyad caliph Abd al-Malik who came to power during the second Muslim civil war (60-72) arranged a hadith that made Jerusalem, which was in the area he controlled, as important for pilgrimage as Mecca, which was in an area controlled by a rival. Fabrication increased even once the Umayyads were established and was continued by the Abbasids to support their rule when they supplanted the Umayyads. Hadiths report the Prophet's favourable treatment and support of Abbasid ancestors.

Hadiths also appeared that clearly have the purpose of suppressing dissent and protecting those in power. Two good examples are found in al-Bukhari. *"If somebody sees his Muslim ruler doing something he disapproves of, he should be patient, for whoever becomes separate from the Muslim group even for a span and then dies,*

he will die as those who died in the Pre-Islamic period of ignorance (as rebellious sinners).”, and in Abu Dawud as well as al-Bukhari, “Every emir is to be followed into war whether he be just or not, and the salat must be performed behind any Muslim be he just or wicked”.[3]

Religious Reasons - Good and Bad

Theological difference such as that concerning the nature of the Quran were another cause of fabricated hadiths. In 212 AH the Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mun adopted the doctrine of createdness. The Quran was God's created word in contrast to the views of traditionist such as the hadith scholar Ibn Hanbal that it was co-eternal with God and hence, uncreated. Ibn Hanbal was imprisoned and tortured and hadiths soon appeared reporting the Prophet had said *“The Quran is eternal, uncreated, and he who says otherwise is a disbeliever”*. Ibn Hanbal was eventually released and another caliph adopted the uncreated belief.

Fabricated hadiths appeared supporting or undermining the different Islamic legal schools then emerging. *“There will be in my community a man named Abu Hanifa, and he will be its lamp ... and there will be in my community a man named Muhammad b. Idris [al-Shafi'i] whose strife is more harmful than that of Satan.”*

A very large number of hadiths were fabricated for the best of reasons. The need to motivate and teach was always great, and guidance expressed in the terms *“The Prophet said ”* was likely to be the most effective. Consequently, pious Muslims didn't think twice about fabricating Prophetic hadiths if they believed the cause was just.

The Increasing Importance of the *Sunna* of the Prophet

Islamic law itself took time to evolve and as the *Sunna* of the Prophet replaced the ancient practices of the community as the main source of law alongside the Quran, and as Islam was established in new centres in the Middle East, Prophetic hadiths became more and more important and with that, the incentive to discover or invent new Prophetic hadiths grew stronger. Fabricated Prophetic hadiths were often based on what

Companions or Successors had done or how scholars genuinely believed the Prophet would have behaved.

***Isnad* Fabrication**

As *isnads* became more important, these too were fabricated and *isnad* fabrication may have been as common as *matn* fabrication.[4] In discussions amongst hadith scholars a participant would not get attention for any hadith he wished to discuss or present unless it had an *isnad*. Also new *isnads* might be fabricated to enhance the authority of existing hadiths.

Authentication - The Leading Role of the *Isnad*

In response to the growing number of fabricated hadiths Sunni hadith scholars developed methods to determine hadith authenticity. This didn't happen quickly and it took 100 years or so until hadith authentication become a widely practiced discipline during the first half of the third century (200-250)

The first and most important requirement was for the hadith report to have an *isnad*. There is an early indication of the importance of *isnads* in the comments of a Successor, Ibn Sirin (d. 110), who said:

In the early period no one would ask about the isnad. But when the strife began they would say 'Name for us your sources' so that the People of the Sunna could be looked at and their hadiths accepted, and the People of Heresy could be looked at and their hadiths ignored.

The strife referred to is probably the second Muslim civil war (60-72), when the grandson of Ali tried to overthrow the successor of the first Umayyad caliph.[5]

The date at which *isnads* became a more formal requirement is debated by scholars. The first generations of Muslim scholars did not bother with *isnads* for all reports all of the time. They were in wide use from 80 AH onwards but they probably achieved their status as an essential element of a hadith in the time of al-Shafi'i (150-204) who was a major influence in establishing the practice that only hadiths traced back to the Prophet himself could be accepted as a source of Islamic law. The statements of other

famous scholars illustrate the leading role of *isnads*: “The *Isnad* is part of the religion. If it were not for the *Isnad*, then any person could say (about Islam) whatever he wished”, Ibn al-Mubarak (118-181); and “[the] *Isnad* is the weapon of a believer so if he does not have a weapon with what will he fight with?”, Sufyan al-Thawri (97-161).

The essential role of the *isnad* led to a second requirement; what was known about the *isnad*? Were all the individual transmitters identified? Were all the individuals in a chain of transmission reliable and trustworthy? Was the chain continuous and contiguous? Consequently great efforts were made to gather information about *isnads* and transmitters.

Classification of Hadiths and Authentication Standards

The most reliable hadiths were classified as sound (*sahih*). That is, they had *isnads* of the highest quality. The rest that were not obviously fabricated, were classified as weak but they covered such a wide range of major and minor flaws that around the end of the third century it was divided into hadiths considered fair (*hasan*) and those with serious defects, considered weak (*da'if*).

Sahih and *hasan* hadiths were accepted by all Sunni scholars as a basis for Islamic law and deciding legal questions. *Hasan* hadiths were especially suited if supported by other traditions or practice.

Little is known about how in practice hadith scholars allocated hadiths to the *sahih* and *hasan* categories. Their collections do not provide much detail. There was no information beyond hadiths were counted as *sahih* if they had a continuous chain entirely composed of upright transmitters free of any charges against them back to the Prophet. A *hasan* hadith was described as one that did not have any transmitter in its chain accused of lying or fabrication and was narrated by more than one chain of transmitters.

Use of Weak Hadiths

In spite of being classified as weak and omitted from the canonical collections weak hadiths were used extensively. The canonical six did not immediately achieve their canonical status and from the

200s AH onwards there were lots of other hadith collections that did not attempt to assess the reliability of their hadiths and these were used extensively by Muslim jurists.

Use of Weak Hadiths in General

Two factors were especially important. Sunni scholars made a distinction between the areas of Islam that required strict adherence such as what Sharia made obligatory or forbidden concerning, for example, prayer, ritual, fasting, marriage, and inheritance laws, and generally leading a pious and religious life. They also saw it as their role generally to persuade the common people to be pious and religious and to benefit from righteous behaviour and avoid harm.

Topics for which Weak Hadiths Could be Used

Hadiths concerning exhortations and warnings were a big category that scholars could use in this way. They described the wonderful rewards believers would receive in heaven for performing good deeds or the terrible punishments they would suffer for bad deeds. Hadiths concerning good manners and morals were other categories where the weakness of a hadith might be ignored.

Scholars avoided hadiths recognised as fabrications or involving known disreputable transmitters but otherwise they were very willing to use weak hadiths supporting values already found in authentic hadiths or found in the Quran that did not undermine Islamic law.[16]

Use of Weak Hadiths in Law

Weak hadiths were also used in law. If Islamic jurists could not find a suitable *sahih* hadith they would make use of a hadith with weaknesses in its *isnad*. It might not have the same level of reliability as a *sahih* hadith but it was not necessarily unreliable. Ibn Hanbal is quoted as stating, "*A weak hadith is dearer to me than the use of independent reason.*"[17]

The degree to which a hadith was backed up by general good practice, the views of Muslim scholars, and similar hadiths were important factors. A fault in the chain of transmitters that prevented it being classified as *sahih* might be ignored, the text of the *matn* was likely to be a good indication of the Prophet's behaviour or thoughts.[18]

The Power of the Prophet's Name

Any guidance, instruction, or advice, carried far more weight if it could be given in the form "the Prophet said ". Consequently, this played a big part in motivating scholars and imams to use hadiths that otherwise did not meet all the authentication criteria. Hadiths were sometimes traced back to Muhammad with the best of intentions. It might also help those who had run short of ideas and things to say. They were simply being more effective in their role to persuade the common people to be pious and religious.

Chapter 5 - Hadith Authority

The other big question about hadiths, in addition to the question of authenticity, concerns their authority, their status and role as a source of Islamic law. The purpose of this section is to highlight its importance and some of the major ideas for and against accepting the authority of hadiths. The two questions are, of course, closely related. It would be difficult to argue for the authority of hadiths that were known to be fabrications.

Brief references concerning hadith authority have been made above; Umar I (d. 23), the second caliph's reluctance to record hadiths, the role of the scholar al-Shafi'i in establishing Prophetic hadiths as the main source of law alongside the Quran, and the *Mu'tazilites* and the use of human reason.

Very Early Opposition

Umar I is a very significant figure. Apart from becoming caliph and ruler of the Islamic world he was one of the Prophet's closest companions who played a major part in establishing Islam and Islamic rule throughout the ancient Middle East. He must have had intimate knowledge of how Muhammad thought and behaved.

Islamic literature from the third century has various reports concerning his views on hadiths such as his decision against writing hadiths for fear such writing would create a second book and second books created by other religions had led to the corruption of those faiths and the neglect of their true teachings. Another report says during his caliphate (12-23) hadiths multiplied and he ordered all written collections of hadiths should be brought to him to be burnt. He wanted to avoid the creation of a book that would compete with the "Book of God". [See Chapter 16 for more on the reasons for and against writing hadiths]

A story about Umar I in one of the great biographical dictionaries shows he was not only against the writing of hadiths but also against their oral transmission. In instructions he issued to

a delegation of administrators being sent to Kufa, one of the new Islamic settlements and centres of power in what is now Iraq, he tells them not to transmit hadiths to the people there as it will distract them from the Quran. He is reported as saying “*Do not distract them with the Hadiths, and thus engage them! Bare the Quran and spare the narration from God’s Messenger*”. To bare the Quran means not to cover the Quran with anything.[1]

Another sign of opposition to the authority of hadiths is a letter said to have been sent to the caliph Abd al-Malik. It criticises the people of Kufa in Iraq, saying:

They abandoned the judgment of their Lord and took hadiths for their religion; and they claim that they have obtained knowledge other than from the Quran . . . They believed in a book which was not from God, written by the hands of men; they then attributed it to the Messenger of God.

Modern scholars believe even if the letter was not addressed to the caliph it was from the end of the first century or first part of the second.[2]

Different Schools of Thought

More than 150 years after Umar’s rule, arguments over the status of hadiths continued as strongly as ever, helped by the increasing number of scholars and growing interest in hadiths in the centres of the now well established Islamic empire. Various schools of thought concerning Islamic law, theology and hadiths emerged in parallel with the *ahl al-hadith*, the partisans of hadith. They could be divided into the *ahl al-ra’y*, the partisans of reason, as they were called by the *ahl al-hadith*, and the *ahl al-kalam*, speculative theologians, a broad grouping including the *Mu’tazilites*.

The *ahl al-ra’y* agreed hadiths could be authoritative and serve as a basis for Islamic law. They accepted the authority of the Prophet in the form of hadiths but believed many hadiths were open to dispute, sometimes contradictory, and unreliable, and it was necessary to be much more selective in the use of hadiths and

also to use other ways of deciding law, such as the existing practice of the community and independent legal reasoning.

The term *ra'y* means "considered opinion" and though originally neutral in meaning was a term of criticism when used by the *ahl al-hadith*. "*Kalam*" corresponds to the equivalent of *ra'y* in the field of theology and means "speculative theology".

The *ahl al-kalam* included both groups that rejected all hadiths and those willing to accept some hadiths. For example, the *Mu'tazilites* had a much more critical view of hadiths and of their authority believing nearly all were unreliable, depending far too much on human memory and transmission. They did not reject the words of the Prophet but doubted that hadiths accurately reported what he said and they had little or no confidence in the *ahl al-hadith* reliance on *isnad* analysis. Content criticism based on reference to the Quran and human reason was the best way to establish the truth of hadiths and their part in Islamic law and dogma. The *Mu'tazilites* also took account of massively transmitted hadiths which could not be fabricated but there were very few of these.

The *ahl al-hadith* strongly opposed the use of human reason which they believed would lead to heresy and the community straying from the true path revealed by the Quran and the example of the Prophet. They had the greatest faith in hadiths and in the methods they were developing to establish hadith authenticity. Hadith content criticism would make human reason the ultimate religious authority rather than revelation. It was far better to depend on a Prophetic hadith even if there might be some doubt about it than to depend on frail and manipulable human reason. Leading *ahl al-hadith* scholars also stressed the use human reason led inevitably to different and competing views.

Dependence on Prophetic hadiths was also a means of unifying Islamic law which was tending to develop in separate ways in the main centres of the Islamic Empire, especially the Hijaz and Kufa in Iraq.

A very good indication of the arguments for and against the authority of hadiths, what was being said and why, can be gleaned from the extant works of the famous hadith scholar al-Shafi'i (150-204), the *Risala* and *Kitab Jima'al-Ilm*. He presents the arguments in the form of debates between himself and imaginary *ahl al-kalam* opponents, firstly one who is against the use of all hadiths and who would rely on the Quran alone, and then one who would use some hadiths but reject those the community found unacceptable.[3]

Chapter 6 - Doubts and Uncertainties

Modern Muslims as well as modern Western scholars have questioned the authenticity of the hadith corpus and the assumptions of early hadith critics. Though they often address the same issues, Muslim discussions have in the main been separate from Western scholarship.

Modern Muslim interest has concentrated on four issues:[1]

- The veracity of the Companions
- The quality of hadith transmission
- The efficacy of *isnad* evaluation
- Content evaluation [Chapter 7 covers this]

Veracity of the Companions

That the Companions were all truthful in reporting the words and actions of the Prophet and beyond reproach became a vital assumption of hadith criticism based on what the Quran and the Prophet said about his generation and those who knew him.

It is, in fact, the Prophet's words in a hadith, that also pose a question about this assumption. In a widely transmitted *mutawatir* hadith[2] the Prophet says "*Let whoever tells lies about me deliberately take his place in hell.*" This implies false stories about the Prophet from those in contact with him, his Companions, were created even in his lifetime.

There are also reports of Companions criticising one another and of disagreements and conflicts between them. They were not all of the habit of doing and saying the right thing all of the time. They were human.

Prolific Hadith Narrators

A handful of Companions originated an enormous number of hadiths. [See Table 3 in Chapter 2] Abu Hurayra, the most prolific, who was with the Prophet for less than three years is given as the

originator of a hadith 5374 times as recorded in a later compilation of collections.

This is in striking contrast to the numbers of hadiths from famous Companions who were associated with the Prophet for much longer including Umar ibn al-Khattab, the close advisor who became the second caliph, 537 hadiths; Ali ibn Abi Talib, the Prophet's son-in-law and cousin, 536 hadiths; and Abu Bakr, the Prophet's successor, 142 hadiths. Abu Bakr was with the Prophet for about 23 years.

The 5374 figure includes repetitions of the same report with different *isnads* and recent research suggests there are between 1200 and 2200 different Abu Hurayra reports,[3] still an amazing number. If he was with the Prophet for less than three years it implies he was recording at least one hadith each and every day over those three years wherever the Prophet was and whatever he was doing.

Very large numbers of hadiths from particular Companions attracted attention even in the early days. There are reports Aisha criticised Abu Hurayra for telling so many stories and for stories about the Prophet she didn't think were correct. Another report has the second caliph, Umar I, calling Abu Hurayra a liar and reprimanded him for his behaviour. He is also supposed to have lived in the palace in Damascus during the time of the first Umayyad caliph, and he thus may have been subject to political pressure to produce hadiths. A large number of his narrations concern Prophetic sayings or deeds he was the only one to witness.[4] In his later years he was said to have boxes of *sahifas*.

There are also several reports of Abu Hurayra himself explaining why he narrated so many hadiths; he said, for example, he spent all his time with the Prophet and the Prophet blessed him with a perfect memory. It is a sign of the difficulties in this subject that hadith reports are quoted to explain or criticise hadith reports!

Early and modern Muslim scholarship shows there are examples of Prophetic hadiths said to have been narrated by Abu Hurayra that are most likely later false ascriptions to him.[5] A

later hadith partisan might have taken his own opinion or a popular opinion of the community at that time and to give it credibility ascribed it to the Prophet via Abu Hurayra, a well-known Companion. [False ascription - backward projection - is discussed in Chapter 10 and Chapter 14]

Another modern line of explanation notes that many of Abu Hurayra's hadith narrations are of the form "*The Prophet said...*" rather than "*I heard the Prophet say...*" which implies he was reporting what he heard other Companions say about the Prophet.[6] He joined the Prophet when he was a young man and lived to his late seventies giving him the time to gather many such reports and pass them on.

Other prolific narrators include Aisha, the Prophet's youngest wife, with 2210 hadiths ascribed to her, Anas ibn Malik, a household servant with 2286, and Ibn Abbas the source for 1660 hadiths.

Ibn Abbas is another Companion who gives rise to questions. Hadiths from him in the early collections are reports of his own opinions, not those of the Prophet, but in later collections such as the canonical six his hadiths are narrations of what the Prophet said, suggesting his hadiths have been projected backwards onto the Prophet. Early sources also give his age as only 13 when the Prophet died, which if true makes it very unlikely he could have witnessed and absorbed so many Prophetic hadiths. [Recent research concerning Ibn Abbas is discussed in Chapter 14]

Reports of Dubious Actions

Other reports show Companions acting with less than complete rectitude or bending the truth to fit their purpose. An infamous story concerns Aisha who was falsely accused of misbehaviour with a man who rescued her after she lost her way in the desert. At first the Prophet took seriously the rumours that were being spread by some of his Companions but a revelation came declaring her innocent.

Hadith Criticism Was Just Starting

Hadith criticism and the appearance of hadith scholars didn't get started until the time of the Successors and after, so there was little or no first hand contact with or information gathering on the Companions that could be used for transmitter evaluation. Interestingly, some of the very early works of hadith criticism listing weak hadiths include hadiths from lesser Companions, which indicates the blanket righteousness ascribed to Companions came later as hadith criticism developed.[7]

Quality of Hadith Transmission

This is a fundamental point. Could reports be passed accurately from one generation to the next over a period of 100 years and longer, involving possibly six or more transmitters, from the death of Muhammad to the creation of the first written collections and the canonical works?

In effect this is two further questions:

- How reliable was oral transmission?
- What was the role of written records?

Reliability of Oral Tradition

Classical sources are clear. Hadith transmission throughout the first century after the Prophet's death was first and foremost oral. Where written records were made they were primarily memory aids for further recitation.

A major potential cause of changes to reports as they were passed along was the widespread practice of transmitting the sense of a report rather than the exact words. Some hadiths are also very long, more like short stories. The hadith examples given in Chapter 1 have an average of 44 words each. The average for all hadiths in al-Bukhari is 94 words each and there are occasionally "mega" hadiths with over 1000 words, that's about two pages of typed A4. (This paragraph has 90 words.) To have such hadiths transmitted orally with complete or even great accuracy over several generations seems very unlikely.

Expert analysis has shown word and other text differences in hadiths covering the same event or report do produce different meanings.[8] Everyday practical experience certainly suggests reports passed verbally from one person to another often change significantly and not through any deliberate ill-will, and this can only get worse if there are several stages of transmission.

Thus by the time writing did become the norm the body of hadiths was widely corrupted beyond hope of recovering what had really been said or what had really happened.

Champions of hadith accuracy respond to this by claiming oral transmission is reliable. It is not uncommon for illiterate peoples to memorise very large numbers of stories, tales and other information.

The Role of Written Records

The extent of written hadith transmission is important because it is likely such transmission would have avoided or lessened the types of problems associated with oral transmission.

Muslim opinion and traditional reports regarding the role of writing are contradictory. As stated above there are hadiths in which Muhammad tells his Companions not to record his words because they might be confused with the Quran while other reports say he allowed recording. This is sometimes explained by scholars claiming the prohibition came early in the Prophet's ministry but was later permitted once knowledge of the Quran was well established.

Official Written Recording Hadith scholars tend to agree that the first official collection and written recording of hadiths was initiated by the Umayyad caliph Umar II (63-101) who ordered the scholar Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri (d. 124) to undertake such work. This is 80 or so years after the time of the Prophet. This ties in with the various reports the early caliphs were against the written recording of hadiths.

There is, however disagreement over the motives for Umar's project; was it to preserve hadiths in general or to support the

government with the collection of hadiths concerning administrative and tax matters? There are no extant copies of what was produced by his initiative and the earliest systematic hadith collection surviving to modern times is the *Muwatta'* of Malik ibn Anas (93-179). This was produced about 130 years after the time of the Prophet.

How Important was Unofficial Writing? Though there is some consensus on what happened at the official level regarding the writing of hadiths there is a range of views about what happened privately.

There are reports individuals wrote down hadiths or had written collections in their possession even though written recording was not officially approved and even discouraged. A leading modern Muslim scholar, Muhammad Mustafa al-Azami, identified 50 Companions who reportedly communicated hadiths in writing and there are hundreds of examples of individuals who are thought to have made written recordings of hadiths or to have had written records in their possession.[9]

On the other hand, if written recording of hadiths had been significant, it might be expected examples had survived. Such private notebooks, known as *sahifas*, were usually made of expensive materials such as papyrus or parchment, or very crude materials, such as palm leaves. They served as memory aids for their owners.

Unofficial written records would have played a part in ensuring hadiths passed from one generation to the next accurately but don't solve the problem of identifying genuine hadiths in the famous collections today.

Efficacy of *Isnad* Evaluation

That the evaluation of the *isnad*, the chain of transmitters, of a hadith was a reliable method of establishing whether the hadith was genuine or not, was another vital assumption of early hadith scholarship. A sound *isnad* meant a hadith was accepted as authentic.

Objectionable Hadiths with Good *Isnads*

One reason for challenging hadiths even though they had been accepted by early hadith critics because their *isnads* were sound, sprung from the reports of the hadiths themselves, the *matn*, the message they conveyed. Even Muslims found some hadiths hard to believe or to want to believe. There were hadiths in the canonical collections that were strange, repellent, rude, and even immoral; surely they couldn't be true. It took a lot of explanation and contorted reasoning to see them in a better light.

Reliability of the *Isnad* Evaluation Method

The fact that hadiths might be questioned because of their message even when they had sound *isnads* poses a huge question about the reliability of the method used to evaluate *isnads*. Hadith scholars who might be willing to question a hadith, even one from a canonical collection, would still fully support the method developed to evaluate transmission chains and the principle that the *isnad* was the essential test.

But it was still very worrying that if al-Bukhari and Muslim the most famous hadith collectors, known especially for the attention they gave to collecting only genuine hadiths, included outrageous and questionable traditions there must be something wrong with their method. They were sincere but their method didn't work. They were too far from the time of the Prophet and couldn't cope with the huge volume of hadiths and the number of fabrications.

Reliability of Transmitter Assessment Hadith critics couldn't interview transmitters, most of them would have been dead for decades, even centuries, and they would have had to make extensive use of other sources, assuming sources existed and could be found, and the opinions of others.

The sources themselves were unlikely to be completely sound also depending on oral transmission which in its turn needed checking. Some may have been deliberately false, as a clever hadith fabricator would take care to make his information appear credible. And, even for well-known transmitters there was likely

to have been conflicting information about them given the rivalries which sometimes existed between different Muslim scholars and schools. The biographical dictionaries that resulted from all this work contain serious contradictions and gaps, and make note of “unknown” transmitters.

This transmitter fact gathering and evaluation had to be done for tens of thousands of individuals in different cities and areas across the early Islamic Empire going back generations. Doing this well in modern times would be a major achievement, but in late antiquity it stretches the imagination.

Experts Disagree A great number of scholars were involved in transmitter evaluation and there was huge scope for disagreement over the assessments of individual transmitters and in the application of the assessment criteria. Serious contradictions over the reliability of individual transmitters are found in the various dictionaries of transmitters compiled by early hadith critics.[10]

The author of the earliest biography of the Prophet, Ibn Ishaq (d. 150), used material from hadiths that famous hadith collectors such as Ibn Hanbal considered unreliable.

It is also notable that al-Bukhari, the compiler of the best known canonical collection, avoids using a transmitter highly regarded by other compilers. There is also an example of al-Bukhari rejecting a hadith from a particular narrator because the hadith content clashes with the content of that hadith from a reliable source, yet al-Bukhari makes extensive use of other hadiths from that narrator.[11]

The fact that all these transmitter assessment difficulties could not be overcome is shown by the existence of *majhuls* (“unknowns”) or transmitters with little information given about them in the biographical dictionaries some of whom had unusually long lives.

Fabrication of *Isnads*

As well as *matns*, the contents of hadiths, *isnads* were fabricated and a good fabricator would be careful to produce a convincing

chain of transmitters. It is even possible *isnad* fabrication was on as large a scale as *matn* fabrication. This seems to have been ignored by early hadith supporters.

As hadiths became more important there was increasing motivation for scholars to enhance the *isnads* of hadiths they were particularly interested in; an unknown transmitter would be replaced by someone famous or well-known. The more prominent the transmitters of a hadith the more likely it would get attention and be discussed.[12]

Chapter 7 - Modern Muslim Views

For Muslims who seek a modern understanding of Islam free of hadith related issues there are, broadly speaking, two main avenues. The first is to discard the hadith altogether and rely totally on the Quran. This is very much a minority position. The second is to criticise hadith content - that is, what hadiths say - on the basis of human reason and knowledge, and to be far more discerning in accepting hadiths.

These two approaches strongly reflect the attitudes to hadiths found among some Muslims during the first three centuries of Islam. Modernity has reignited doubts from long ago.

Content Criticism

Isnad evaluation was the mainstay of early hadith criticism. The contents of hadiths - what they conveyed - were secondary but opinions on exactly how they were treated differ. Some modern critics say hadith scholars completely ignored hadith *matns* because so much effort went into evaluating *isnads*. Another view is they choose to work around the problem by doing all they could to find ways of interpreting problematic hadiths and those that seemed to clash with the Quran, that made them acceptable.

The fact is, to modern minds even the most famous canonical collections contain many hadiths that are downright objectionable or peculiar by modern standards.[1] Muslims believe the failures of early hadith criticism can be made good and hadiths that should not have been accepted identified and rejected.

Muslim reformers at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries sought to free Islam from the grip of the past and to introduce modern human reasoning. There was no doubt that hadiths were important. The common people believed them and they were used by politicians and religious leaders to promote political agendas and extreme views.

More recent times have seen increasing conflicts within the Muslim world and between Muslims and non-Muslims and

friction between Muslim minorities and non-Muslim majorities in non-Muslim countries. This has created widespread suspicion of Islam reflected in the media across the world and hadiths are quoted to demonstrate the inherent backwardness and violence of Islam. Islamic scholars must identify and reject hadiths used to make unfounded accusations and absurd or even outrageous content that makes the religion a potential object of ridicule.[2]

Hadith topics and hadiths identified as questionable by modern minded Muslims and discussed in recent publications and on the web include:[3]

Hadiths that Contradict Science, Strange Hadiths and Problematic Hadiths

There are hadiths that make claims or statements of a scientific or medical nature that are clearly wrong and many hadiths that portray or suggest behaviour and events the great majority of mankind would find odd or objectionable. Examples include:

- Black cumin is a cure for all diseases;
- When there is more than enough water to fill two pitchers it bears no impurity;
- A child will resemble the parent who discharges first;
- Nobody should drink while standing, if anyone forgets, he must vomit;
- A date-palm cried because Muhammad moved away from it;
- Playing chess is like dyeing your hand with the flesh and blood of swine.

There are women demeaning hadiths:

- The majority of the inhabitants of hell are women because women are ungrateful to men;

- Women are not fit to lead;
- Women are intellectually deficient; and
- Women, dogs, asses, and pigs passing too close nullify prayer.

More anti-women hadiths are discussed below. The relevant hadiths are found in the canonical collections, even the most famous. Al-Bukhari and Muslim are not short of hadiths modern people find strange or outrageous.

Hadiths that Contradict the Quran

Even though Islamic scholarship and jurisprudence found ways of explaining and accommodating hadiths that contradicted or appeared to contradict the Quran [See Chapter 5, section on Abrogation] it is still a source of concern for some modern Muslims. For them, there really is a clear cut clash.

Coercion in Conversion to Islam This hadith in Muslim unambiguously reports the Prophet's statement that he is ordered to fight non-believers until they accept Islam.

I have been commanded to fight against people, till they testify to the fact that there is no god but Allah, and believe in me (that) I am the messenger (from the Lord) and in all that I have brought. And when they do it, their blood and riches are guaranteed protection on my behalf except where it is justified by law, and their affairs rest with Allah. [Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 34 / Book 1, Hadith 31]

It is notable the reference "*their blood and riches are guaranteed*" makes it clear the hadith countenances violence. Jihad is a military affair.

The hadith contrasts with these Quranic injunctions:

There shall be no coercion in matters of faith. Distinct has now become the right way from [the way of] error. [Q2:256]

If they turn away, we have not sent you as a guard over them: you are not bound to do more than deliver the message. [Q42:48]

And so, [O Prophet,] exhort them; your task is only to exhort: you cannot compel them [to believe]. [Q88:21 - 22]

These verses are clearly against the use of force to compel people to believe the Prophet's message or to make them believers.

ANNEX 2 gives a representative sample of hadiths in general including some indicated as contradictory, unscientific or strange. ANNEX 4 gives a sample of hadiths challenged by hadith opponents in the second Islamic century.

PART 2

MODERN WESTERN SCHOLARSHIP

Chapter 9 - Goldziher

Introduction

The Hungarian Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921) was not the first modern Western scholar to question the authenticity of hadiths. As early as 1848 Gustav Weil (1808-1889) suggested at least half of al-Bukhari's famous collection should be rejected.[1]

Goldziher was the first to set out at length and examine the questions raised in a major academic work, *Muslim Studies*, published in two volumes in 1889-90 which became the starting point for much of later Western scholarship concerning hadiths.

Goldziher's Reasons for Doubting Hadiths

A number of observations lay at the heart of Goldziher's suspicion of hadiths. There were no documents about the Prophet written in his lifetime and what was known about him had been transmitted for at least 100 years primarily by oral communication, a process vulnerable to accidental and deliberate distortion.

There were anachronistic hadiths concerning conflicts and matters that only emerged after the Prophet's death that could not be his words. For example, Goldziher reports this comment of an Islamic theologian in modern times.

One of the strangest things has ever happened to me was this: when I recited the traditional sayings according to which scholars are told not to mingle with the sultans, one of my listeners said: "How could the Prophet have said this, since there were no sultans in his days?" This poor man did not know of the tradition that the apostle of God had predicted with prophetic insight everything that is going to happen until the hour of resurrection. [Muslim Studies v2, p143]

There were contradictory hadiths with respectable *isnads*. Later hadith collections contained many hadiths that were not to be found in earlier collections. It was odd that younger Companions transmitted many more hadiths than older Companions who had known the Prophet for much longer.

Goldziher's Conclusions and Their Impact

Goldziher saw a good part of the hadiths as *"a battlefield of the political and dynastic conflicts of the first few centuries of Islam"*. [MS v2, p115] He wrote:

Abd Allah b. Lahi'a (d. 174) tells of a converted heretic who pointed out to him that he must be careful when taking over hadiths because 'when we advanced one of our opinions, we used to give it the form of a hadith.'

.... this confession corresponds to the truth. Every stream and counter-stream of thought in Islam has found its expression in the form of a hadith, and there is no difference in this respect between the various contrasting opinions in whatever field. What we learnt about political parties holds true too for differences regarding religious law, dogmatic points of difference etc. Every ra'y or hawa, every sunna and bid'a has sought and found expression in the form of a hadith. [MS v2, p126]

Although Goldziher accepted there was a genuine effort to gather authentic hadiths and such hadiths existed, he firmly believed that:

In the absence of authentic evidence it would indeed be rash to attempt to express the most tentative opinion as to which parts of the hadith are the oldest original material, or even as to which of them date back to the generations immediately following the Prophet's death. Closer acquaintance with the vast stock of hadiths induces sceptical caution rather than optimistic trust regarding the material brought together in the carefully compiled collections. [MS v2, p18]

As Goldziher saw matters only a very small proportion, indeed, of the canonical collections including the famous *Sahihan*, al-Bukhari and Muslim, could be authentically from the Prophet, the great majority were of later origin.

He felt the huge number of hadiths in the canonical collections created *"sceptical caution rather than optimistic trust"*. Goldziher concluded:

[hadiths could] not serve as a document for the history of the infancy of Islam, but (served) rather as a reflection of the tendencies which appeared in the community during the maturer stages of its

development. It contains invaluable evidence for the evolution of Islam during the years when it was forming itself into an organized whole from powerful mutually opposed forces. [MS v2, p19]

This enormous degree of scepticism advocated by Goldziher was his major contribution to Western hadith scholarship. He did not provide any methods for analysing or determining the origins of specific hadiths. His findings on dating were of a general nature; later stages of development or first centuries of Islam.[4] But he set the scene for later modern Western scholars.

Chapter 10 - Schacht

Schacht's Role

The next major contribution to modern Western hadith scholarship came from Joseph Schacht (1902-1969), a British German-born scholar who taught at Oxford University, the University of Leiden, and Columbia University, where he became professor of Arabic and Islamic studies. His groundbreaking study, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, was published in 1950.

Schacht's Observations

Two important observations underlie Schacht's conclusion that Prophetic hadiths were fabrications created after the time of the Prophet.

Hadiths Not Used When They Might Have been

Schacht believed: *[t]he best way of proving that a tradition did not exist at a certain time is to show that it is not used as a legal argument in a discussion which would have made reference to it imperative, if it had existed. [The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence, p140]*

In fact, early documents concerning Islamic legal affairs hardly ever mentioned Prophetic traditions. A prime example quoted by Schacht concerns advice given to Abd al-Malik (d. 86), the second

Umayyad caliph. An advisor told him not to support belief in predestination and backed up this advice with quotes from the Quran and earlier prophets. There are hadiths that cover this question but the advisor makes no reference at all to these hadiths and that is most likely because they did not exist at that time.

The Contrast Between Early and Later Hadith Collections

Another fact of great significance for Schacht was the relatively small number of Prophetic hadiths found in extant early hadith collections. Far more of the doctrines of the early Islamic law schools originated with Successors or Companions than with the Prophet. The hadiths in a famous version of Malik's *Muwatta'* (93-179) breakdown as follows:[3]

Table 7 – Origins of Hadiths in Malik's Muwatta'		
Traced back to:	Number	Percentage %
Successors	285	17
Companions	613	36
Malik himself	291	17
The Prophet	527	31
Total	1716	100%

In contrast to the above after the time of al-Shafi'i (150-204) the canonical six collections (created over the period 220-270) contained almost exclusively Prophetic hadiths. It is also striking that some of the reports traced back to the Prophet in the later collections can be found in the early collections traced back only to a Successor or Companion.

Reports attributed to Companions in Malik's *Muwatta'* could be found a generation later, attributed to the Prophet by al-Shafi'i via defective *isnads* with gaps between the Prophet and the first narrator, and after another generation found in a canonical collection, such as al-Bukhari, with a complete *isnad*. Schacht

believed if a hadith had been from the Prophet, scholars like Malik would have made that clear in their collections as a Prophetic hadith would have far more authority than a report from a Companion or Successor.

It cannot be doubted that the stage of referring to the teaching and the example of the Prophet was preceded by, and grew out of, an earlier stage in which reference was made to Companions (and Successors) only. [A Revaluation of Islamic Traditions. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1949]

A recent study by Scott C. Lucas published in 2008, *Where are the Legal Hadith? A Study of the Musannaf of Ibn Abi Shayba* shows most of the 39,000 reports in Ibn Abi Shayba's (156-235) *Musannaf* are from Companions and Successors. Only 9% of the legal rules cite a hadith from the Prophet.[4]

Schacht's Unsettling Conclusions

To sum it up, Schacht was telling the world that the hadith, the *Sunna* of the Prophet, what Muslims considered the foundation of their laws along with the Quran, was a later development. Not only was it an innovation but very few hadiths were genuine or genuinely from the Prophet. It was largely fabrication. He forcefully summed it up as follows:

... every legal tradition from the Prophet, until the contrary is proved, must be taken not as an authentic or essentially authentic, even if slightly obscured, statement valid for his time or of the time of the Companions, but is the fictitious expression of a legal doctrine formulated at a later date. [Origins, p149]

Schacht's Methods - Dating Hadiths

It is also with regard to dating hadiths that Schacht went beyond the issues addressed by Goldziher. Schacht proposed several rules or methods to determine when a hadith was created or falsely attributed to the Prophet.

The Initial Single Strand and the Common Link

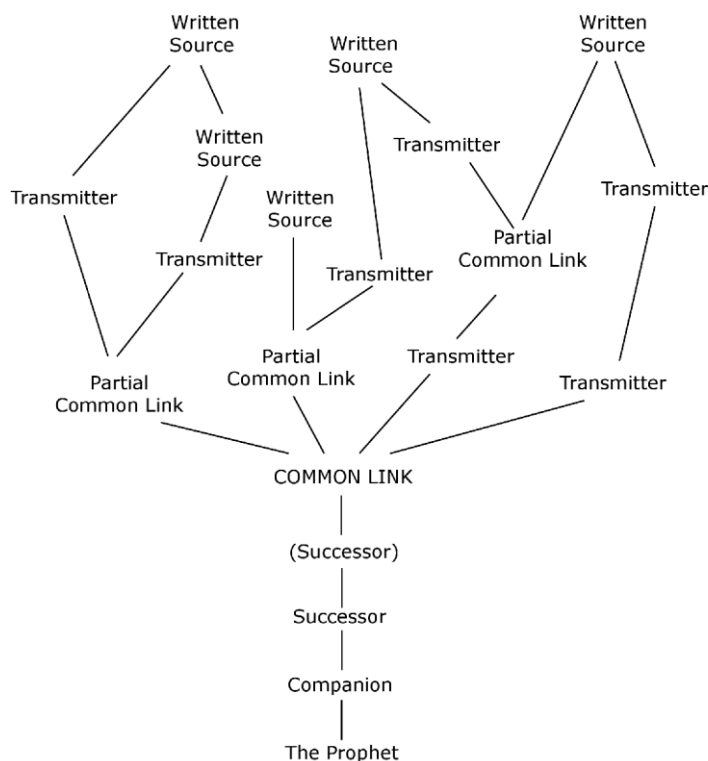
Schacht's third method concerns the *isnad*. He noticed a striking pattern.

Most hadiths exist in a number of versions each with its own *isnad*. Typically an *isnad* contains five to seven names from the informer of the collector who first wrote it down in a collection back to the Companion who witnessed and narrated what the Prophet said or did.

By putting all the *isnads* for the different versions of a particular hadith *matn* together in a bundle Schacht found a striking pattern: The first three or four persons who transmit the hadith are identical. Almost all versions have the lower part of the *isnad* in common. They do not begin to divide immediately after the Prophet. In the majority of cases there is a single strand of three to four transmitters before the hadith story begins to spread to more than one person. See Diagram 1.

In the six books, this pattern is found for nearly all hadiths and their variations. Most hadiths are apparently originated by a single Companion. It is a stunning fact.

Diagram 1 - The Initial Single Strand and the Common Link



Schacht found this incredible. Is it believable a given Prophetic act or saying was witnessed by only a single Companion and this Companion told only one person who in turn told only one person? And, why is this feature so widespread?

Schacht named the transmitter from whom the hadith first starts to spread out, the “common link”, and argued this common link, was, in fact, the fabricator of the hadith and marked the date of its origin. Although he considered common links as hadith fabricators, Schacht believed the *isnads* up from common links to collectors mainly recorded what really happened and thus gave some genuine historical information.

Chapter 11 - Juynboll

Juynboll's Role

Gautier Juynboll (1935-2010), a Dutch scholar, extended and refined Schacht's ideas concerning the nature of *isnads* and the fabrication of hadiths.

His two best known works are: *Muslim Tradition: Studies in Chronology, Provenance and Authorship of Early Hadith* (1983) and the *Encyclopedia of Canonical Hadith* (2007)

Though Juynboll built on Schacht's work demonstrating its usefulness and how some historical information can be gleaned from *isnads*, he did not go as far as Schacht in assuming all hadiths suspect and likely to be fabrications. He took the view that to some degree they tell us what the Prophet said and how he behaved.

He also places the date for the appearance of hadiths with *isnads* to the end of the first century, several decades earlier than Schacht places it.

Juynboll's Analysis

Juynboll believed Schacht's common link theory was of the utmost importance. It was highly significant that different *isnads* for a particular *matn* all had the same strand of transmitters from the time of the Prophet up to a common link where they split into two or more transmitter strands sometimes with further splits following. [See Diagram 1 in Chapter 10 about Schacht]

Juynboll looked more closely at the patterns created by the *isnads* of a *matn* and introduced terminology to describe various features that could be seen in the patterns and rules to determine if an *isnad* and its *matn* were possibly genuine or fabricated.

Like Schacht, Juynboll concentrated on *isnads* giving relatively little attention to the details of *matns*, but unlike Schacht who had considered the transmissions above the common link to be the believable part of the *isnad*, Juynboll was far more sceptical.[4]

One-to-Many

Juynboll's one-to-many principle is central to his explanation of what can be gleaned from *isnads* and how we can identify who most likely first put a tradition or its wording into circulation.

He states: *The more strands of one particular bundle come together in one transmitter, either converging in him and/or blossoming forth from him, the more that moment of transmission, which can be seen as a 'knot', deserves to be considered historically tenable.* [Encyclopedia, pxix]

The more people who pass on a hadith from a particular transmitter the more likely it is that particular transmitter really did transmit that hadith at that time. He took the view each transmitter was most likely to pass on a tradition to more than one person and this would be the natural pattern for *isnads*. If this pattern did not show when the *isnads* of a tradition were compared, it was unlikely the *isnad* was genuine.

Significance of Juynboll's Analysis

Although Juynboll, as stated above, believes at least part of the Prophetic tradition deserves to be considered as fair representation of the Prophet's words or deeds, his analysis of *isnads* casts a huge question mark over the authenticity of hadiths; was such and such as reported really said or done by the Prophet.

If the part of a hadith's *isnads* after the common link form bundles when shown together, with partial common links followed by further partial common links up to the collector, then the *isnads* from the common link, at least, are genuine. The hadith *matn* really did originate or come from that common link. If however the *isnads* between the common link and the collector are single strands giving a spider pattern then they are most likely fabricated by the collector or the collector's informant. They are back projections from a present time to an earlier time.

This, of course, invites the question, how prevalent are bundles and spider patterns in the hadith collections? Juynboll himself notes in al-Mizzi's (d. 742) later compilation of the hadith *isnads* in the canonical collections, spiders occur in their thousands, whereas

the true *isnad* bundles, with a historically tenable common link, are at most a few hundred. He also explains the frequency of genuine common links must have been much higher during the early stages of hadith evolution.

It is because of insertions, interpolations, deletions and simplifications in matns that additional isnads supporting these alterations became so complex and variegated that the initial isnad or proto-isnad, clearly showing up a common link, supporting the hadith without accretions was no longer separately discernible. The common link phenomenon, in other words, was buried under the accretions. [MT, p216]

The common link for most hadiths has been obscured by the scale and complexity of *isnad* fabrication.

Chapter 12 - Common Links and Single Strands

A Striking Phenomenon - The Initial Single Strand

The majority of hadiths that are repeated in several collections but with different *isnads* back to the Prophet have the same three or four initial transmitters. [See discussion above in Chapter 11] In other words, the chain of transmission from the Prophet's time only begins to spread out after the third or fourth generation.

Schacht and many others found this incredible. Is it believable a given Prophetic act or saying was witnessed by a single Companion and this Companion told only one person who in turn told only one person? Schacht named the transmitter from whom the hadith first starts to spread out, the "common link", and argued this common link, was, in fact, the fabricator of the hadith and marked the date of its origin. And, as a rule, there is only one common link for a given hadith.

What Does the Common Link Represent?

Notwithstanding Schacht's and Juynboll's assessment of the common link as the fabricator of the hadith, other modern scholars argue common links are genuine transmitters.

Most common links belong to the generations living in the early or mid-part of the second century (roughly 100 to 175) which was the time when the interest in hadith collection and dissemination really became significant. Thus, common links can be viewed as the first systematic hadith collectors who professionally passed on their knowledge to students in teaching or scholarly circles.[1]

That common links are mostly genuine collectors doesn't exclude the possibility traditions were sometimes fabricated or collectors simply made mistakes or were misled over the content of a tradition and where it came from. The common link may also have summarised or combined content - differently worded stories said the same thing - and thus become the originator of the

wording of a particular hadith; the gist of the report is authentic but the words are those of the common link collector.

There is a third possibility.[2] The person named as the common link did not transmit the tradition said to have been transmitted by him. He has nothing whatsoever to do with it. The transmission path from him to the collection in which the tradition is recorded may be the backward ascription of the collector or his informer.

Whether or not the single strand below the common link itself makes sense or withstands close scrutiny throws some light on the nature of the common link. Is the common link a fabricator or a transmitter?

Chapter 13 - Latest Research

- ICMA (*isnad-cum-matn* analysis)

Introduction

The works of Schacht and Juynboll and the methods they developed, especially Juynboll's *isnad* analysis, reinforced and spread the sceptical view that nearly all hadiths were likely to be fabrications. They were not the genuine words or deeds of the Prophet.

Other Western scholars developed new methods to investigate the origins and authenticity of hadiths, starting as far back as the 1950s but coming into most prominence in the 1990s and recent decades.[1] The best known methods are *isnad-cum-matn* analysis [ICMA] and historical source analysis and they concentrate on trying to date the origin of individual hadiths or to be precise what scholars call the *terminus ante quem*, the latest date at which something happened (it happened at that date or before), in contrast to thinking in terms of a *terminus post quem*, the earliest date at which something happened (it happened at that date or after).

They are said to take a sanguine view of hadiths.[2] They neither assume hadiths are most likely to be fabrications nor that they are likely to be authentic. Only after relevant analysis can any judgements be made whether a hadith is genuine or false. Another feature of recent research has been to make greater use of all available hadith collections not just the canonical six. Of course, most scholars fall somewhere between two extremes of complete scepticism and acceptance of hadiths.

The principles of ICMA were first formally outlined in works published in 1996 by Gregor Schoeler and Harald Motzki.[3] They both highlighted the need to examine *matns* together with their *isnads* and how they related to one another.

ICMA - Method

The variations in the different versions of a hadith *matn* coming via different *isnad* chains from a common link are most likely the result of how each *matn* was handled by the transmitters in the *isnad* chain going back to the common link. Variations can take many forms; items added, items omitted, and textual features, for example.

If there is a common core - common archetype - for all the versions of that hadith that can be traced back to and identified with a common link, then that common link is very likely to be the genuine source of that common archetype. He really did transmit that hadith.

If there is still only a lone single strand below the ICMA confirmed common link back to the time of the Prophet methods other than ICMA are needed to evaluate that single strand and determine the origin of the hadith.

This approach makes use of all the *isnad* strands, including the single strands, between a hadith in a collection and a common link. Juynboll considered single strands in which a single transmitter narrates to a single transmitter who narrates to a single transmitter etc., to be unreliable and that they should be ignored. Single strand *isnads* sometimes show up an earlier common link than would be identified following Juynboll's rule. Also, the greater use of hadith collections outside the canonical six has produced *isnad* chains that identify earlier common links than found by relying mainly on the canonical collections.

It is noteworthy that if the ICMA method was rejected on the grounds it did not identify genuine common links, it would still be necessary to explain the observed correlations between hadith *matns* and *isnads*. *Isnad* growth or mass fabrication are unlikely to produce such correlations.[4]

ICMA - Applicability, Limitations and Results

As well as the usefulness described above ICMA has a number of limitations. The method can be used to investigate the origins of a

hadith only if there are many versions of its *matn* in extant sources. This substantially limits the scope for the research. Then there is a considerable challenge in how to analyse variations; what really constitutes a similarity that can be traced to a common source?

Up to a point it helps to have a good amount of text to work with and this is the case for historical traditions found in the *sira*. Narratives of historical events have a lot more information than typical legal hadiths that are mostly like pronouncements tending to be brief with little context. This explains the extent of the ICMA focussed on *sira* traditions.

Another factor in the limitation of the use of ICMA is the scale of the work involved in examining a single tradition for what might sometimes produce only a limited result.

There have been some 20 or so ICMA or ICMA related studies over the last 20 years. ANNEX 5 lists these studies.

There are solid results, some of which are briefly summarised above. Traditions found in the extant written sources of the third century, 200 years or more after the Prophet, can be traced to earlier times, to the end of the first or beginning of the second century, some possibly to 30 or 50 years after the time of the Prophet.

More sceptical experts point out the “reconstructed” earlier versions of traditions give only elementary and basic information.[7] The kernel of possible historical truth doesn’t say very much; there was a treaty, there was a scandal involving Muhammad’s wife, he did have a vision. And the results of examining the very early history before the common link have not been convincing.

Most importantly, there is still a gap between the ICMA verified date of the transmission of the tradition and the event it is describing and studies in other fields especially the origins of Christianity show even a small gap between an account and the event it concerns can produce great uncertainty and conflicting interpretations.

Chapter 14 - Latest Research - More Methods

Beyond ICMA 1

As noted above ICMA applies best where there is an *isnad* bundle of some form giving different versions of a *matn* traced by various *isnad* strands back to a common link. The single strand below the common link back to the given source requires other methods to investigate the authenticity of that source and the *matn*'s origin.

An example of the use of both ICMA work and other methods is given in the research paper "*A Bequest May Not Exceed One-Third*": *An isnad-cum-matn Analysis and Beyond*, by Pavel Pavlovitch and David S. Powers, published in 2015.

The Quran has two sets of verses concerning inheritance, one dealing with bequests, the other with inheritance shares. The relationship between them is defined by a tradition in which the Prophet advises the Companion, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, that he may leave a bequest of no more than one-third of his wealth. The one-third upper limit ensures two-thirds of an estate will be divided according to the inheritance shares specified in the Quran. Also a bequest may not be made to an heir.

Using ICMA Pavlovitch and Powers show a body of traditions concerning the one-third stipulation and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas can be traced to common links who died in 136 to 144 AH and 150 AH respectively, thus tracing tradition to the early part of the second century.

To go back further they examine the word "*kalala*" used in the traditions. *Kalala* is a word found in the Quran but early Quran commentators did not know what it meant. There are a number of such mystery words and phrases in the Quran. Through previous work Pavlovitch and Powers had shown that eventually two competing definitions of the word emerged, Pavlovitch concluding they emerged in the Hijaz and Kufa, respectively, in the first half of the second century. The versions are "*urathu*

kalalatan” (“I will die in a state of leaving neither parent nor child”) and “*yarithuni kalalatun*” (“persons other than a parent or child will inherit from me”).

The word is used in these two ways in the body of traditions examined by Pavlovitch and Powers and this points clearly to the tradition originating after the Prophet’s lifetime. Muhammad did not tell Sa’d ibn Abi Waqqas he could bequeath only one third of his estate. The tradition was very likely put into circulation during the late Umayyad caliphate to improve existing legislation and as was the habit, given the authority of the Prophet himself.

Beyond ICMA 2

Another recent paper “*Pray with Your Leader*”: A Proto-Sunni Quietist Tradition by Stijn Aerts published in 2016 investigates a hadith previously studied by Juynboll and further illustrates the scope and challenges of modern dating methods. It also gives support to the view that hadiths were fabricated for political reasons.

There are four main versions of the hadith which all have the central message that the Prophet said believers should perform the *salat* (the obligatory Muslim prayer performed five times each day) at the appointed time and repeat it if it was delayed to a later time by the ruler. Using his *isnad* and common link methods [see Chapter 11] Juynboll determined the hadith originated with Shu’ba ibn al-Hajjaj (d. 160).

Also using the common link method but more hadith sources than Juynboll, Aerts identifies two earlier partial common links, Abu l-Aliya al-Barra (d. 90) and Abu Imran al-Jawni (d. 128) as transmitters of versions of the hadith. Aerts uses the canonical six and six other collections, whereas Juynboll used the canonical six and two *musnads*.

Aerts employs ICMA to substantiate these partial common links are genuine transmitters but the method cannot be used to establish the validity of the source they both give. To go earlier into the hadith’s origins Aerts notes the wording of the versions

“suggest that the background against which the tradition emerged is that of the postponement of prayer of one or more Umayyad governors in Iraq”.

He explains the historical circumstances at that time. There are accounts of religious disputes playing a part in a revolt and references to “killing of the prayer” and “... the *Sunna* of the Prophet” meaning neglect of the prayer and the *Sunna*. Two of the regime’s representatives in Iraq, the governors Ibn Ziyad and al-Hajjaj, were publicly accused of delaying the salat at the time the tradition was circulated. Aerts concludes the tradition was invented by the authorities in reaction to activists who disapproved of Umayyad religious practice, especially the postponement of the salat. The tradition strongly denies such neglect and in effect says one must obey the ruler as well as follow the *Sunna* of the Prophet.

Chapter 16 - Oral vs Written Transmission

Characteristics of Oral Transmission

The degree to which hadiths depended on human memory and oral transmission in the early days of Islam has a considerable bearing on the question of their historical reliability.

Human memory and oral transmission are much more vulnerable to change, distortion and error than written information especially as the length of time such transmission is used increases. Older communities relied on it more than we do now and may have been better than we are today at using it but modern examples [1] of how memory and oral transmission produce highly inaccurate accounts of what happened in the past, even the very recent past, are a stark warning not to assume oral information is reliable.

Such a system also gives greater scope to extraneous factors, such as the way the Muslim community developed, influencing how transmitters understood what they heard and passed it on. Religious and political strife have a far greater impact possibly leading to distortion and falsification.

Early Modern Scholarship

The Western View

Early modern Western scholars took the view hadiths during the first century were nearly always memorised and transmitted orally. Early Muslim tradition itself says this was the case. There was fierce opposition to writing hadiths, indicated by hadiths against any written recording and historical accounts of hadith writing being discouraged or suppressed. Some Western scholars took all this to mean oral transmission dominated well into the second century.

A dependence on oral transmission also explains the striking variations, even contradictions, in the hadiths emanating from a particular initial narrator found in the later written collections.

The very first written hadith collections later used to compile the earliest extant and well-known collections were made only in the first half of the second century.

The Eastern View

In reaction to the Western view several Muslim and Middle Eastern scholars, especially Nabia Abbott, [2] published research claiming most hadiths were transmitted both in oral and written mode from the very beginning even during the lifetime of the Prophet, until they were compiled in the collections of the second century and the famous canonical collections of the mid-third century.

They depended mainly on evidence from the biographical sources which provide reports about the writing of hadiths in the first century and the written compilations of the second century, and disputes over such activities. The problem with this is the biographical sources themselves were produced much later, between the third and ninth centuries, and it is a major assumption they are correct about much earlier events.

There is also a striking lack of any surviving manuscripts from the early period. Abbott blames the second caliph, Umar I (d. 23), for this. He ordered the destruction of hadith manuscripts because he feared written hadiths would compete with the Quran and undermine its authority especially in the newly conquered territories. Following his death and the Uthman distribution of the official Quran hadiths were once again widely available in written form.

ANNEX 1 - Hadith Topics in al-Bukhari

The following Table lists all the books (chapters) of *Sahih* al-Bukhari and the number of hadiths found in each book. *Sahih* al-Bukhari is published in two formats. This is the one that divides into 97 books and is by far the most widely used for printed publications. Each book deals with a particular topic. There are 7563 hadiths in total according to the most widely used numbering system.

Contents of Sahih al-Bukhari		
Book	The Book of:	Hadiths
1	The Beginning of Revelation	7
2	Belief	51
3	Knowledge	76
4	Ablutions	113
5	Ritual Bathing	46
6	Menstruation	40
7	Dry Ablution, Rubbing with Dust	15
8	Prayers (Salat)	172
9	Prayer Times	82
10	Call to Prayers (Adhan)	273
11	Friday Prayer	66
12	Fear Prayer	6
13	Two Eid Festivals	42
14	Witr Prayer	15
15 Chapters on:	Prayer for Rain	35

16 Chapters on:	Prayer During Eclipses	26
17 Chapters on:	Prostration During Recital of Quran	14
18 Chapters on:	Shortening the Prayers	40
19	Night Prayer	68
20	Virtue of Praying in Mecca and Medina	10
21 Chapters on:	Actions while Praying	26
22 Chapters on:	Forgetfulness During Prayer	13
23	Funerals	158
24	Obligatory Charity Tax (Zakat)	118
25	Pilgrimage (Hajj)	250
26 Chapters on:	Lesser Pilgrimage (Umrah)	34
27 Chapters on:	Pilgrims Prevented from Completing the Pilgrimage	15
28	Penalty for Hunting while on Pilgrimage	46
29	Virtues of Medina	24
30	Fasting	117
31	Prayer at Night in Ramadan	6
32	Virtues of the Night of Power	11
33	Seclusion in the Mosque	22
34	Sales, Trade and Transactions	192
35	Sales Pre-Payment	18
36	Pre-Emption	3
37	Renting, Hiring	26
38	Transference of Debt	4
39	Suretyship	9
40	Acting by Proxy	21
41	Agriculture	31

42	Watering	33
43	Loans, Paying Debts, the Freezing of Assets, and Bankruptcy	26
44	Litigation	16
45	Lost Property	14
46	Oppression and Coercion	44
47	Partnership	24
48	Mortgaging, Secured Loans	8
49	Freeing Slaves, Manumission	44
50	Contracts of Manumission	6
51	Gifts, the Virtue of Giving Them, and the Encouragement to Give	71
52	Witnesses, Testimonies	53
53	Peacemaking	21
54	Conditions	27
55	Bequests, Wills and Testaments	44
56	Fighting for the Cause of Allah (Jihad) and Military Expeditions	309
57	Obligation of Surrendering a Fifth of the War Booty	65
58	Tax on non-Muslims living under Islamic rule (Jizya)	34
59	Beginning of Creation	136
60	Stories of the Prophets	163
61	Virtues and Merits of the Prophet and his Companions	160
62	Companions of the Prophet	127
63	Virtues of the Helpers in Medina (Ansar)	173

64	Military Expeditions led by the Prophet	525
65	Interpretation of the Quran	504
66	Virtues of the Quran	85
67	Marriage (Nikah)	188
68	Divorce	100
69	Expenditure on the Family	22
70	Food	94
71	Sacrifice on the Occasion of Birth	8
72	Hunting, Slaughtering Animals	70
73	Eid Sacrifices	30
74	Drinks	65
75	Sick People	38
76	Medicine	105
77	Clothing	187
78	Good Manners	257
79	Asking Permission	77
80	Supplications	108
81	Making the Heart Tender	182
82	Divine Decree	27
83	Oaths and Vows	87
84	Expiation for Oaths	16
85	Laws of Inheritance	48
86	Prescribed Penalties	88
87	Blood Money	58
88	Apostates and Renegades, and Fighting Against Them	22
89	Compulsion	13

90	Deception, Tricks	29
91	Interpretation of Dreams	66
92	Afflictions, Tribulations and the End of the World	89
93	Judgements	89
94	Wishing, Longing	20
95	Accepting Information	22
96	Holding Fast to the Quran and the Sunna	103
97	Oneness of Allah (Tawhid)	193

The next Table adds together hadiths on closely related topics, e.g. *Interpretation of the Quran* and *Virtues of the Quran*, and puts them under an appropriate broader heading. The categories are listed according to the number of hadiths each has.

The largest category is *Religious Instruction and Knowledge* (24% of all hadiths in al-Bukhari), followed by *Military Campaigns and Jihad* (12%), *Prayer* (12%), *Family Life and Law* (7%) and *Pilgrimage and Festivals* (6%).

Size of Different Topic Categories of Hadiths in Sahih al-Bukhari	
Topic Category	Hadiths
Religious Instruction and Knowledge: The Beginning of Revelation; Belief; Virtues of the Night of Power; Beginning of Creation; Stories of the Prophets; Virtues and Merits of the Prophet and his Companions; Companions of the Prophet; Virtues of the Helpers in Medina (Ansar); Interpretation of the Quran; Virtues of the Quran; Divine Decree; Afflictions, Tribulations and the End of the World; Holding Fast to the Quran and the Sunna; Oneness of Allah (Tawhid)	1829 (24.2%)
Military, Jihad: Fighting for the Cause of Allah (Jihad) and Military Expeditions; Obligation of Surrendering a	899 (11.9%)

Fifth of the War Booty; Military Expeditions led by the Prophet	
Prayer: Prayers (Salat); Prayer Times; Call to Prayers (Adhan); Friday Prayer; Fear Prayer; Witr Prayer; Prayer for Rain; Prayer During Eclipses; Prostration During Recital of Quran; Shortening the Prayers; Night Prayer; Virtue of Praying in Mecca and Medina; Actions while Praying; Forgetfulness During Prayer; Prayer at Night in Ramadan; Seclusion in the Mosque	874 (11.6%)
Family, Ceremonies, Related Law: Funerals; Bequests, Wills and Testaments; Marriage (Nikah); Divorce; Expenditure on the Family; Sacrifice on the Occasion of Birth; Laws of Inheritance.	568 (7.5%)
Pilgrimage, Festivals: Two Eid Festivals; Hajj (Pilgrimage); Umrah (Lesser Pilgrimage); Pilgrims Prevented from Completing the Pilgrimage; Penalty for Hunting while on Pilgrimage; Eid Sacrifices	417 (5.5%)
Trade, Business, Agriculture: Sales, Trade and Transactions; Sales Pre-Payment; Pre-Emption; Renting; Hiring; Transference of Debt; Suretyship; Acting by Proxy; Agriculture; Watering; Loans, Paying Debts, the Freezing of Assets, and Bankruptcy; Partnership; Mortgaging, Secured Loans	395 (5.2%)
Law: Litigation; Lost Property; Witnesses, Testimonies; Oaths and Vows; Expiation for Oaths; Prescribed Penalties, Blood Money	332 (4.3%)
Good Manners	257
Clothing	187
Making the Heart Tender	182
Ablution and Bathing: Ablutions; Ritual Bathing; Dry Ablution, Rubbing with Dust	174
Food and Drink: Food; Drinks	159
Tax: Obligatory Charity Tax (Zakat); Jizya (tax on non-	152

Muslims living under Islamic rule)	
Sickness and Medicine: Sick People; Medicine	143
Fasting	117
Supplications	108
Judgements	89
Asking Permission	77
Knowledge	76
Gifts, the Virtue of Giving Them, and the Encouragement to Give	71
Hunting, Slaughtering Animals	70
Interpretation of Dreams	66
Slaves: Freeing Slaves, Manumission; Contracts of Manumission	50
Oppression and Coercion	44
Menstruation	40
Deception, Tricks	29
Conditions	27
Virtues of Medina	24
Apostates and Renegades, and Fighting Against Them	22
Accepting Information	22
Peacemaking	21
Wishing, Longing	20
Compulsion	13

ANNEX 2 - Hadith Examples

Topics Covered

- [Prayer, Belief, Signs](#)
- [Doing Good and Good Behaviour](#)
- [Concerning Women](#)
- [Jihad](#)
- [Apostasy](#)
- [Punishment](#)
- [Personal Behaviour](#)
- [Art and Games](#)
- [Miscellaneous Reports](#)
- [Unscientific and Strange](#)

There are 81 hadiths in total in this ANNEX. All except two are classified as *sahih*. They have *isnads* of the highest quality and are considered sound, that is, authentic.

NOTES

(1) The hadiths below are both quotes, repeating what the Prophet said, and reports, describing an event involving the Prophet (which may contain Prophetic quotes). Which is which is usually obvious but it is also made clear by the reference to the narrator given at the end of the *matn*. E.g. [Narrated so-and-so: Allah's Messenger said:] or simply [Narrated so-and-so:]

(2) Further information in brackets gives the collection in which the hadith is found and two further references to locate it. The first is used in printed publications and sometimes on the web. The second is widely used on the web.

(3) See Sources below for links to comprehensive and well know hadith collections.

Prayer, Belief, Signs

Whoever establishes prayers during the nights of Ramadan out of sincere faith, and hoping to attain Allah's rewards (not for showing off), then all his past sins will be forgiven.

[Narrated Abu Hurayra: Allah's Messenger said:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 2, Hadith 30 / Book 2, Hadith 36*]

The reward of the prayer offered by a person in congregation is twenty five times greater than that of the prayer offered in one's house or alone. And this is because if he performs ablution and does it perfectly and then proceeds to the mosque with the sole intention of praying, then for every step he takes towards the mosque, he is upgraded one degree in reward and his one sin is taken off from his accounts of deeds. When he offers his prayer, the angels keep on asking Allah's blessings and Allah's forgiveness for him as long as he is (staying) at his Musalla. They say, "O Allah! Bestow Your blessings upon him, be Merciful and kind to him." And one is regarded in prayer as long as one is waiting for the prayer.

[Narrated Abu Hurayra: Allah's Apostle said:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 10, Hadith 44 / Book 11, Hadith 620*]

A faithful believer while in prayer is speaking in private to his Lord, so he should neither spit in front of him nor to his right side but he could spit either on his left or under his foot.

[Narrated Anas ibn Malik: The Prophet said:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 8, Hadith 63 / Book 8, Hadith 405*]

al-Islam is raised on five (pillars), testifying (the fact) that there is no god but Allah, that Muhammad is His bondsman and messenger, and the establishment of prayer, payment of Zakat, Pilgrimage to the House (Kaba) and the fast of Ramadan.

[It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah son of Umar that the Messenger of Allah said:] [Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 21 / Book 1, Hadith 20]

Whoever obeys me, obeys Allah, and whoever disobeys me, disobeys Allah, and whoever obeys the ruler I appoint, obeys me, and whoever disobeys him, disobeys me.

[Narrated Abu Hurayra: Allah's Messenger said:] [al-Bukhari, Book 93, Hadith 1 / Book 89, Hadith 251]

If somebody sees his Muslim ruler doing something he disapproves of, he should be patient, for whoever becomes separate from the Muslim group even for a span and then dies, he will die as those who died in the Pre-Islamic period of ignorance (as rebellious sinners). [Narrated Ibn Abbas: The Prophet said:] [al-Bukhari, Book 93, Hadith 7 / Book 89, Hadith 257]

A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim. So he should neither oppress him nor hand him over to an oppressor. And whoever fulfilled the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfill his needs.

[Narrated Abdullah ibn Umar: Allah's Messenger said:] [al-Bukhari, Book 89, Hadith 12 / Book 85, Hadith 83]

He who makes peace between the people by inventing good information or saying good things, is not a liar.

[Narrated Umm Kulthum bint Uqba: That she heard Allah's Messenger saying:] [al-Bukhari, Book 53, Hadith 3 / Book 49, Hadith 857]

Abu Juhaifa said, "I asked Ali, 'Have you got any book (which has been revealed to the Prophet apart from the Quran)?' Ali replied, 'No, except Allah's Book or the power of understanding which has been bestowed (by Allah) upon a Muslim or what is (written) in this sheet of paper (with me).' Abu Juhaifa said, 'I asked, 'What is (written) in this sheet of paper?' Ali replied, 'it deals with The Diyya (compensation (blood money) paid by the killer to the relatives of the victim), the ransom for the releasing of the captives from the hands of the enemies, and the law that no Muslim should

be killed in Qisas (equality in punishment) for the killing of (a disbeliever)'."

[Narrates Ash-Shabi:] [al-Bukhari, Book 3, Hadith 53 / Book 3, Hadith 111]

There are six things with Allah for the martyr. He is forgiven with the first flow of blood he suffers, he is shown his place in Paradise, he is protected from punishment in the grave, secured from the greatest terror, the crown of dignity is placed upon his head - and its gems are better than the world and what is in it - he is married to seventy two wives along Al-Huril-Ayn of Paradise, and he may intercede for seventy of his close relatives.

[Narrates Al-Miqdam ibn Madiykarib: That the Messenger of Allah said:] [al-Tirmidhi, Book 22, Hadith 46 / Book 20, Hadith 1663] [Classified as *Hasan*]

By Him in Whose hand is the life of Muhammad, he who amongst the community of Jews or Christians hears about me, but does not affirm his belief in that with which I have been sent and dies in this state (of disbelief), he shall be but one of the denizens of Hell-Fire.

[It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayra that the Messenger of Allah observed:] [Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 293 / Book 1, Hadith 284]

Doing Good and Good Behaviour

The one who looks after and works for a widow and for a poor person, is like a warrior fighting for Allah's Cause or like a person who fasts during the day and prays all the night.

[Narrates Safwan ibn Salim: The Prophet said:] [al-Bukhari, Book 78, Hadith 37 / Book 73, Hadith 35]

By the One in Whose Hand is my soul! You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love one another. Shall I inform you about a matter which if you do it, then you will love one another? Spread the Salam among each other.

[Narrates Abu Hurayra: that the Messenger of Allah said:] [al-Tirmidhi, Book 42, Hadith 1 / Book 40, Hadith 2688]

Avoid suspicion, for suspicion is the gravest lie in talk and do not be inquisitive about one another and do not spy upon one another and do not feel envy with the other, and nurse no malice, and nurse no aversion and hostility against one another. And be fellow-brothers and servants of Allah.

[*Abu Hurayra reported Allah's Messenger as saying:*] [*Muslim, Book 45, Hadith 35 / Book 32, Hadith 6214*]

None of you will have faith till he wishes for his (Muslim) brother what he likes for himself.

[*Narrated Anas: The Prophet said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 2, Hadith 6 / Book 2, Hadith 12*]

A person came to Allah's Messenger and said: Who among the people is most deserving of a fine treatment from my hand? He said: Your mother. He again said: Then who (is the next one)? He said: Again it is your mother (who deserves the best treatment from you). He said: Then who (is the next one)? He (the Holy Prophet) said: Again, it is your mother. He (again) said: Then who? Thereupon he said: Then it is your father.

[*Abu Hurayra reported:*] [*Muslim, Book 45, Hadith 1 / Book 32, Hadith 6180*]

The Prophet said thrice, "Should I inform you out the greatest of the great sins?" They said, "Yes, O Allah's Apostle!" He said, "To join others in worship with Allah and to be undutiful to one's parents." The Prophet then sat up after he had been reclining (on a pillow) and said, "And I warn you against giving a false witness", and he kept on saying that warning till we thought he would not stop.

[*Narrated Abu Bakr:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 52, Hadith 18 / Book 48, Hadith 822*]

I asked the Prophet "Which deed is the dearest to Allah?" He replied, "To offer the prayers at their early stated fixed times." I asked, "What is the next (in goodness)?" He replied, "To be good and dutiful to your parents" I again asked, "What is the next (in

goodness)?" He replied, "To participate in Jihad in Allah's cause." Abdullah added, "I asked only that much and if I had asked more, the Prophet would have told me more."

[Narrated Abdullah:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 9, Hadith 6 / Book 10, Hadith 505*]

Concerning Women

I was shown the Hell-fire and that the majority of its dwellers were women who were ungrateful. It was asked, "Do they disbelieve in Allah?" (or are they ungrateful to Allah?) He replied, "They are ungrateful to their husbands and are ungrateful for the favors and the good (charitable deeds) done to them. If you have always been good (benevolent) to one of them and then she sees something in you (not of her liking), she will say, 'I have never received any good from you'".

[Narrated Ibn Abbas: *The Prophet said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 2, Hadith 22 / Book 2, Hadith 28*]

During the battle of Al-Jamal, Allah benefited me with a Word (I heard from the Prophet). When the Prophet heard the news that the people of the Persia had made the daughter of Khosrau their Queen (ruler), he said, "Never will succeed such a nation as makes a woman their ruler."

[Narrated Abu Bakr:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 92, Hadith 50 / Book 88, Hadith 219*]

The Prophet married her when she was six years old and he consummated his marriage when she was nine years old, and then she remained with him for nine years (i.e., till his death).

[Narrated Aisha:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 67, Hadith 69 / Book 62, Hadith 64*]

A woman should not travel for more than three days except with a Dhi-Mahram (i.e. a male whom she cannot marry at all, e.g. her brother, father, grandfather, etc.) or her own husband.)

[Narrated Ibn Umar: *The Prophet said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 18, Hadith 7 / Book 20, Hadith 192*]

Once Allah's Messenger went out to the Musalla (to offer the prayer) of Id-al-Adha or Al-Fitr prayer. Then he passed by the women and said, "O women! Give alms, as I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hell-fire were you (women)." They asked, "Why is it so, O Allah's Messenger?" He replied, "You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. A cautious sensible man could be led astray by some of you." The women asked, "O Allah's Messenger! What is deficient in our intelligence and religion?" He said, "Is not the evidence of two women equal to the witness of one man?" They replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her intelligence. Isn't it true that a woman can neither pray nor fast during her menses?" The women replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her religion."

[Narrated Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 6, Hadith 9 / Book 6, Hadith 301*]

Indeed the woman is like a rib, if you try to straighten her you will break her, and if you leave her, what you enjoy from her will be with the crookedness.

[Abu Hurayra narrated that: The Messenger of Allah said:] [*al-Tirmidhi, Book 13, Hadith 15 / Book 8, Hadith 1188*]

If a husband calls his wife to his bed (i.e. to have sexual relation) and she refuses and causes him to sleep in anger, the angels will curse her till morning.

[Narrated Abu Hurayra: Allah's Messenger said:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 59, Hadith 48 / Book 54, Hadith 460*]

A woman, an ass and a dog disrupt the prayer, but something like the back of a saddle guards against that.

[Abu Hurayra reported: The Messenger of Allah said:] [*Muslim, Book 4, Hadith 301 / Book 4, Hadith 1034*]

Allah has cursed those women who practise tattooing or get it done for themselves, and those who remove hair from their faces,

and those who create spaces between their teeth artificially to look beautiful, such ladies as change the features created by Allah. Why then shall I not curse those whom Allah's Messenger has cursed and who are cursed in Allah's Book too?

[*Narrated Ibn Masud:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 77, Hadith 158 / Book 72, Hadith 826*]

An Ansari woman gave her daughter in marriage and the hair of the latter started falling out. The Ansari women came to the Prophet and mentioned that to him and said, "Her (my daughter's) husband suggested that I should let her wear false hair." The Prophet said, "No, (don't do that) for Allah sends His curses upon such ladies who lengthen their hair artificially."

[*Narrated Aisha:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 67, Hadith 139 / Book 62, Hadith 133*]

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "For a nail of iron to be driven in the head of one of you would be better for him than to touch a woman who is not lawful for him."

[*Ma'qil ibn Yasar reported:*] [*al-Tabarani, Mu'jam Al-Kabeer 16910*]
[*Sahih according to al-Haythami*]

Jihad

I have been commanded to fight against people, till they testify to the fact that there is no god but Allah, and believe in me (that) I am the messenger (from the Lord) and in all that I have brought. And when they do it, their blood and riches are guaranteed protection on my behalf except where it is justified by law, and their affairs rest with Allah.

[*It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurayra that he heard the Messenger of Allah say:*] [*Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 34 / Book 1, Hadith 31*]

Know that Paradise is under the shades of swords.

[*Narrated Abdullah ibn Abi Aufa: Allah's Messenger said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 56, Hadith 34 / Book 52, Hadith 73*]

The Hour will not be established until you fight with the Jews, and the stone behind which a Jew will be hiding will say. "O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, so kill him".

[*Narrated Abu Hurayra: Allah's Messenger said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 56, Hadith 139 / Book 52, Hadith 177*]

A woman was found killed in one of the battles fought by the Messenger of Allah. He disapproved of the killing of women and children.

[*It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah that:*] [*Muslim, Book 32, Hadith 28 / Book 19, Hadith 4319*]

It is reported on the authority of Sa'b b. Jaththama that the Prophet of Allah, when asked about the women and children of the polytheists being killed during the night raid, said: They are from them.

[*Muslim, Book 32, Hadith 30 / Book 19, Hadith 4321*]

I have been given five things which were not given to any one else before me. (1) Allah made me victorious by awe, (by His frightening my enemies) for a distance of one month's journey. (2) The earth has been made for me (and for my followers) a place for praying and a thing to perform Tayammum, therefore anyone of my followers can pray wherever the time of a prayer is due. (3) The booty has been made Halal (lawful) for me yet it was not lawful for anyone else before me. (4) I have been given the right of intercession (on the Day of Resurrection). (5) Every Prophet used to be sent to his nation only but I have been sent to all mankind.

[*Narrated Jabir ibn Abdullah: The Prophet said:*] [*al-Bukhari: Book 7, Hadith 2 / Book 7, Hadith 331*]

Allah's Apostle was asked, "What is the best deed?" He replied, "To believe in Allah and His Apostle (Muhammad)". The questioner then asked, "What is the next (in goodness)?" He replied, "To participate in Jihad in Allah's Cause." The questioner again asked, "What is the next (in goodness)?" He replied, "To perform Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca) Mubruur, (which is accepted by

Allah and is performed with the intention of seeking Allah's pleasure only and not to show off and without committing a sin and in accordance with the traditions of the Prophet."

[*Narrated Abu Hurayra:*] [*al-Bukhari: Book 2, Hadith 19 / Book 2, Hadith 25*]

One who died but did not fight in the way of Allah nor did he express any desire (or determination) for Jihad died the death of a hypocrite.

[*It has been narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayra that the Messenger of Allah said:*] [*Muslim: Book 33, Hadith 226 / Book 20, Hadith 4696*]

Lands shall be thrown open to you and Allah will suffice you (against your enemies), but none of you should give up playing with his arrows.

[*It has been narrated on the authority of Uqba b. Amir who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah say:*] [*Muslim, Book 33, Hadith 242 / Book 20, Hadith 4712*]

A man came to the Prophet and asked, "O Allah's Messenger! What kind of fighting is in Allah's cause? (I ask this), for some of us fight because of being enraged and angry and some for the sake of his pride and haughtiness." The Prophet raised his head (as the questioner was standing) and said, "He who fights so that Allah's Word (Islam) should be superior, then he fights in Allah's cause."

[*Narrated Abu Musa:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 3, Hadith 65 / Book 3, Hadith 125*]

The tradition has been narrated on the authority of Abdullah b. Qais. He heard it from his father who, while facing the enemy, reported that the Messenger of Allah said: Surely, the gates of Paradise are under the shadows of the swords. A man in a shabby condition got up and said; Abu Musa, did you hear the Messenger of Allah say this? He said: Yes. (The narrator said): He returned to his friends and said: I greet you (a farewell greeting). Then he broke the sheath of his sword, threw it away, advanced with his

(naked) sword towards the enemy and fought (them) with it until he was slain.

[*Muslim, Book 33, Hadith 211 / Book 20, Hadith 4681*]

Allah guarantees to the person who carries out Jihad for His Cause and nothing compelled him to go out but the Jihad in His Cause, and belief in His Words, that He will either admit him into Paradise or return him with his reward or the booty he has earned to his residence from where he went out.

[*Narrated Abu Hurayra: Allah's Messenger said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 97, Hadith 83 / Book 93, Hadith 549*]

Apostasy

A man embraced Islam and then reverted back to Judaism. Muadh ibn Jabal came and saw the man with Abu Musa. Muadh asked, "What is wrong with this (man)?" Abu Musa replied, "He embraced Islam and then reverted back to Judaism." Muadh said, "I will not sit down unless you kill him (as it is) the verdict of Allah and His Apostle".

[*Narrated Abu Musa:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 93, Hadith 21 / Book 89, Hadith 271*]

Some Zanadiqa (atheists) were brought to Ali and he burnt them. The news of this event, reached Ibn Abbas who said, "If I had been in his place, I would not have burnt them, as Allah's Messenger forbade it, saying, 'Do not punish anybody with Allah's punishment (fire).' I would have killed them according to the statement of Allah's Messenger, 'Whoever changed his Islamic religion, then kill him'".

[*Narrated Ikrima:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 88, Hadith 5 / Book 84, Hadith 57*]

The blood of a Muslim who confesses that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that I am His Apostle, cannot be shed except in three cases: In Qisas for murder, a married person who commits illegal sexual intercourse and the one who reverts from Islam (apostate) and leaves the Muslims.

[Narrated Abdullah: Allah's Messenger said:] [al-Bukhari, Book 87, Hadith 17 / Book 83, Hadith 17]

During the last days there will appear some young foolish people who will say the best words but their faith will not go beyond their throats (i.e. they will have no faith) and will go out from (leave) their religion as an arrow goes out of the game. So, where-ever you find them, kill them, for whoever kills them shall have reward on the Day of Resurrection.

[Narrated Ali: No doubt I heard Allah's Apostle saying:] [al-Bukhari, Book 88, Hadith 12 / Book 84, Hadith 64]

Punishment

Whomever you find doing the actions of the people of Lut then kill the one doing it, and the one it is done to.

[Narrated Ibn Abbas: That the Messenger of Allah said:] [al-Tirmidhi, Book 17, Hadith 40 / Book 15, Hadith 1456] [Classified as *Hasan*]

Verily Allah has ordained a way for them (the women who commit fornication), (When) a married man (commits adultery) with a married woman, and an unmarried male with an unmarried woman, then in case of married (persons) there is (a punishment) of one hundred lashes and then stoning (to death). And in case of unmarried persons, (the punishment) is one hundred lashes and exile for one year.

[Ubada b. as-Samit reported that Allah's Apostle said:] [Muslim, Book 29, Hadith 19 / Book 17, Hadith 4192]

A man came to the Prophet and said, "I beseech you to judge us according to Allah's Laws." Then his opponent who was wiser than he, got up and said, "He has spoken the truth. So judge us according to Allah's Laws and please allow me (to speak), O Allah's Messenger." The Prophet said, "Speak." He said, "My son was a laborer for the family of this man and he committed illegal sexual intercourse with his wife, and I gave one-hundred sheep and a slave as a ransom (for my son), but I asked the religious learned people (regarding this case), and they informed me that

my son should be flogged one hundred stripes, and be exiled for one year, and the wife of this man should be stoned (to death)." The Prophet said, "By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, I will Judge you (in this case) according to Allah's Laws. The one-hundred (sheep) and the slave shall be returned to you and your son shall be flogged one-hundred stripes and be exiled for one year. And O Unais! Go in the morning to the wife of this man and ask her, and if she confesses, stone her to death." She confessed and he stoned her to death.

[*Narrated Abu Hurayra and Zaid ibn Khalid Al-Juhani:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 86, Hadith 82 / Book 82, Hadith 842*]

A bedouin came and said, "O Allah's Messenger! Judge between us according to Allah's Laws." His opponent got up and said, "He is right. Judge between us according to Allah's Laws." The bedouin said, "My son was a laborer working for this man, and he committed illegal sexual intercourse with his wife. The people told me that my son should be stoned to death; so, in lieu of that, I paid a ransom of one hundred sheep and a slave girl to save my son. Then I asked the learned scholars who said, "Your son has to be lashed one-hundred lashes and has to be exiled for one year." The Prophet said, "No doubt I will judge between you according to Allah's Laws. The slave-girl and the sheep are to go back to you, and your son will get a hundred lashes and one year exile." He then addressed somebody, "O Unais! go to the wife of this (man) and stone her to death" So, Unais went and stoned her to death.

[*Narrated Abu Hurayra and Zaid ibn Khalid Al-Juhani:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 53, Hadith 6 / Book 49, Hadith 860*]

There was a man who looked after the family and the belongings of the Prophet and he was called Karkara. The man died and Allah's Apostle said, "He is in the (Hell) Fire." The people then went to look at him and found in his place, a cloak he had stolen from the war booty.

[*Narrated Abdullah ibn Amr:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 56, Hadith 280 / Book 52, Hadith 308*]

Whoever drinks alcoholic drinks in the world and does not repent (before dying), will be deprived of it in the Hereafter.

[Narrated Ibn Umar: Allah's Apostle said:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 74, Hadith 1 / Book 69, Hadith 481*]

The hand should be cut off for stealing something that is worth a quarter of a Dinar or more.

[Narrated Aisha: The Prophet said:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 86, Hadith 18 / Book 81, Hadith 780*]

Personal Behaviour

If you want to put on your shoes, put on the right shoe first; and if you want to take them off, take the left one first. Let the right shoe be the first to be put on and the last to be taken off.

[Narrated Abu Hurayra: Allah's Messenger said:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 77, Hadith 72 / Book 72, Hadith 747*]

None of you should drink while standing; and if anyone forgets, he must vomit.

[Abu Hurayra reported Allah's Messenger as saying:] [*Muslim, Book 36, Hadith 153 / Book 23, Hadith 5022*]

Allah likes sneezing and dislikes yawning, so if someone sneezes and then praises Allah, then it is obligatory on every Muslim who heard him, to say: May Allah be merciful to you. But as regards yawning, it is from Satan, so one must try one's best to stop it, if one says "Ha" when yawning, Satan will laugh at him.

[Narrated Abu Hurayra: The Prophet said:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 78, Hadith 247 / Book 73, Hadith 242*]

If anyone of you rouses from sleep and performs the ablution, he should wash his nose by putting water in it and then blowing it out thrice, because Satan has stayed in the upper part of his nose all the night.

[Narrated Abu Hurayra: The Prophet said:] [*al-Bukhari, Book 59, Hadith 104 / Book 54, Hadith 516*]

My uncle asked Allah's Messenger about a person who imagined to have passed wind during the prayer. Allah's Apostle replied: "He should not leave his prayers unless he hears sound or smells something."

[*Narrated Abbad ibn Tamim:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 4, Hadith 3 / Book 4, Hadith 139*]

None of you should offer prayer in a single garment that does not cover the shoulders.

[*Narrated Abu Hurayra: The Prophet said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 8, Hadith 11 / Book 8, Hadith 355*]

If anyone of you goes to an open space for answering the call of nature he should neither face nor turn his back towards the Qibla; he should either face the east or the west.

[*Narrated Abu Aiyub Al-Ansari: Allah's Messenger said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 4, Hadith 10 / Book 4, Hadith 146*]

The Prophet said, "While defecating, neither face nor turn your back to the Qibla but face either east or west." Abu Aiyub added. "When we arrived in Sham we came across some lavatories facing the Qibla; therefore we turned ourselves while using them and asked for Allah's forgiveness."

[*Narrated Abu Aiyub Al-Ansari:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 8, Hadith 46 / Book 8, Hadith 388*]

Whenever anyone of you makes water he should not hold his penis or clean his private parts with his right hand. (And while drinking) one should not breathe in the drinking utensil.

[*Narrated Abu Qatada: The Prophet said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 4, Hadith 20 / Book 4, Hadith 156*]

None of you should spit in front or on his right but he could spit either on his left or under his foot.

[*Narrated Anas: The Prophet said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 8, Hadith 62 / Book 8, Hadith 404*]

Art and Games

We were going with Allah's Messenger. As we reached the place (known as) Arj there met (us) a poet who had been reciting poetry. Thereupon Allah's Messenger said: Catch the satan or detain the satan, for filling the belly of a man with pus is better than stuffing his brain with poetry.

[*Abu Sa'id Khudri reported:*] [*Muslim, Book 41, Hadith 10 / Book 28, Hadith 5611*]

Some poetry contains wisdom.

[*Narrated Ubai ibn Kab: Allah's Messenger said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 78, Hadith 171 / Book 73, Hadith 166*]

The bell is the musical instrument of the Satan.

[*Abu Hurayra reported Allah's Messenger as saying:*] [*Muslim, Book 37, Hadith 159 / Book 24, Hadith 5279*]

The Prophet entered upon me while there was a curtain having pictures (of animals) in the house. His face got red with anger, and then he got hold of the curtain and tore it into pieces. The Prophet said, "Such people as paint these pictures will receive the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection".

[*Narrated Aisha:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 78, Hadith 136 / Book 73, Hadith 130*]

While I was with Ibn Abbas a man came and said, "O father of Abbas! My sustenance is from my manual profession and I make these pictures." Ibn Abbas said, "I will tell you only what I heard from Allah's Messenger. I heard him saying, 'Whoever makes a picture will be punished by Allah till he puts life in it, and he will never be able to put life in it.'" Hearing this, that man heaved a sigh and his face turned pale. Ibn Abbas said to him, "What a pity! If you insist on making pictures I advise you to make pictures of trees and any other unanimated objects."

[*Narrated Sa'id ibn Abu Al-Hasan:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 34, Hadith 172 / Book 34, Hadith 428*]

Miscellaneous Reports

If a house fly falls in the drink of anyone of you, he should dip it (in the drink) and take it out, for one of its wings has a disease and the other has the cure for the disease.

[*Narrated Abu Hurayra: The Prophet said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 59, Hadith 126 / Book 54, Hadith 537*]

It was mentioned before the Prophet that there was a man who slept the night till morning (after sunrise). The Prophet said, "He is a man in whose ears (or ear) Satan had urinated."

[*Narrated Abdullah:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 59, Hadith 80 / Book 54, Hadith 492*]

If a dog drinks from the utensil of anyone of you it is essential to wash it seven times.

[*Narrated Abu Hurayra: Allah's Messenger said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 4, Hadith 38 / Book 4, Hadith 173*]

Whoever keeps a (pet) dog which is neither a watch dog nor a hunting dog, will get a daily deduction of two Qirat from his good deeds.

[*Narrated Ibn Umar: The Prophet said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 72, Hadith 6 / Book 67, Hadith 389*]

The Prophet used to like to start from the right side on wearing shoes, combing his hair and cleaning or washing himself and on doing anything else.

[*Narrated Aisha:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 4, Hadith 34 / Book 4, Hadith 169*]

Once the Prophet entered a lavatory and I placed water for his ablution. He asked, "Who placed it?" He was informed accordingly and so he said, "O Allah! Make him (Ibn Abbas) a learned scholar in religion (Islam).

[*Narrated Ibn Abbas:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 4, Hadith 9 / Book 4, Hadith 145*]

Unscientific and Strange Hadiths

There is healing in black cumin for all diseases except death.

[*Narrated Abu Hurayra: I heard Allah's Apostle saying:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 76, Hadith 11 / Book 71, Hadith 592*]

When you eat, do not wipe your hands till you have licked it, or had it licked by somebody else.

[*Narrated Ibn Abbas: The Prophet said:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 70, Hadith 85 / Book 65, Hadith 366*]

As for the resemblance of the child to its parents: If a man has sexual intercourse with his wife and gets discharge first, the child will resemble the father, and if the woman gets discharge first, the child will resemble her.

[*Narrated Anas:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 60, Hadith 4 / Book 55, Hadith 546*]
[Part of a longer text]

The Prophet used to stand by a tree or a date-palm on Friday. Then an Ansari woman or man said. "O Allah's Messenger! Shall we make a pulpit for you?" He replied, "If you wish." So they made a pulpit for him and when it was Friday, he proceeded towards the pulpit (for delivering the sermon). The datepalm cried like a child! The Prophet descended (the pulpit) and embraced it while it continued moaning like a child being quietened. The Prophet said, "It was crying for (missing) what it used to hear of religious knowledge given near to it."

[*Narrated Jabir ibn Abdullah:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 61, Hadith 93 / Book 56, Hadith 784*]

A man came to the prophet and said, "My brother has got loose motions". The Prophet said, "Let him drink honey." The man again (came) and said, "I made him drink (honey) but that made him worse." The Prophet said, "Allah has said the Truth, and the abdomen of your brother has told a lie."

[*Narrated Abu Sa'id:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 76, Hadith 33 / Book 71, Hadith 614*]

The Prophet, was asked about water (in desert country) and what is frequented by animals and wild beasts. He replied: When there is enough water to fill two pitchers, it bears no impurity.

[*Narrated Abdullah ibn Umar:*] [*Abu Dawud, Book 1, Hadith 63 / Book 1, Hadith 63*]

From among my followers there will be some people who will consider illegal sexual intercourse, the wearing of silk, the drinking of alcoholic drinks and the use of musical instruments, as lawful. And there will be some people who will stay near the side of a mountain and in the evening their shepherd will come to them with their sheep and ask them for something, but they will say to him, 'Return to us tomorrow.' Allah will destroy them during the night and will let the mountain fall on them, and He will transform the rest of them into monkeys and pigs and they will remain so till the Day of Resurrection.

[*Narrated Abu Amir or Abu Malik Al-Ashari: that he heard the Prophet saying:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 74, Hadith 16 / Book 69, Hadith 494*]

That the Meccan people requested Allah's Apostle to show them a miracle, and so he showed them the splitting of the moon.

[*Narrated Anas:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 61, Hadith 141 / Book 56, Hadith 831*]

I was with the Prophet and the time for the Asr prayer became due. We had no water with us except a little which was put in a vessel and was brought to the Prophet. He put his hand into it and spread out his fingers and then said, "Come along! Hurry up! All those who want to perform ablution. The blessing is from Allah." I saw the water gushing out from his fingers. So the people performed the ablution and drank, and I tried to drink more of that water (beyond my thirst and capacity), for I knew that it was a blessing. The sub-narrator said: I asked Jabir, "How many persons were you then?" He replied, "We were one-thousand four hundred men." Salim said: Jabir said, 1500.

[*Narrated Jabir ibn Abdullah:*] [*al-Bukhari, Book 74, Hadith 65 / Book 69, Hadith 543*]

Sources

There are numerous websites that provide access to the well known hadith collections. Here are several readers will find useful if they wish to study more hadiths.

Sites Using the Printed Publication In Book Reference System

QuranX.com

sunnah.com

Sites Using Popular Web Reference System

hadithcollection.com

SearchTruth.com

QuranX.com

Alim.org

Site Providing Detailed Subject Index

Alim.org

ANNEX 4 - Contradictory Hadiths - Examples

Hadiths and Quran verses may not be quoted in full but references are given for complete versions.

Hadiths Contradicting the Quran

Adultery

Hadiths A number of hadiths make clear the punishment for adultery is stoning. For Example:

.... I will decide between you according to the Book of Allah. And, O Unais, go to this woman in the morning, and if she makes a confession, then stone her. He (the narrator) said: He went to her in the morning and she made a confession. And Allah's Messenger made pronouncement about her and she was stoned to death. [*Muslim, Book 29, Hadith 38 / Book 17, Hadith 4209*]

.... He (the Holy Prophet) entrusted [her] child to one of the Muslims and then pronounced punishment. And she was put in a ditch up to her chest and he commanded people and they stoned her. [*Muslim, Book 29, Hadith 35 / Book 17, Hadith 4206*]

.... He (again) came round facing him and said to him: Allah's Messenger, I have committed adultery. He (the Holy Prophet) turned away until he did that four times, and as he testified four times against his own self, Allah's Messenger called him and said: Are you mad? He said: No. He (again) said: Are you married? He said: Yes. Thereupon Allah's Messenger said: Take him and stone him. [*Muslim, Book 29, Hadith 23 / Book 17, Hadith 4196*]

.... So the Prophet ordered the two adulterers to be stoned to death, and they were stoned to death near the place where biers used to be placed near the Mosque. I saw her companion (i.e. the adulterer) bowing over her so as to protect her from the stones. [*al-Bukhari, Book 65, Hadith 4556 / Book 60, Hadith 79*]

.... By Allah, Allah's Apostle never killed anyone except in one of the following three situations: (1) A person who killed somebody unjustly, was killed (in Qisas,) (2) a married person who committed illegal sexual intercourse and (3) a man who fought against Allah and His Apostle and deserted Islam and became an apostate. [*al-Bukhari, Book 87, Hadith 38 / Book 83, Hadith 37*]

In addition to hadiths concerning Muslims there is a hadith in which Muhammad orders stoning for adultery on two Jews.

A Jew and a Jewess were brought to Allah's Messenger on a charge of committing an illegal sexual intercourse. The Prophet asked them. "What is the legal punishment (for this sin) in your Book (Torah)?" The Torah was brought, and then one of the Jews put his hand over the Divine Verse of the Rajam (stoning to death) So Allah's Apostle ordered that the two (sinners) be stoned to death, and so they were stoned. [*al-Bukhari, Book 86, Hadith 48 / Book 82, Hadith 809*]

Quran The Quran says the punishment is flogging and makes no mention of stoning.

[Q24:2] The adulteress and adulterer should be flogged a hundred lashes each, and no pity for them should deter you from the law of God, if you believe in God and the last day; and the punishment should be witnessed by a body of believers.

Another verse concerning married slave girls says:

[Q4:25] [Make them] married women, not adulteresses or lovers. If they commit adultery when they are married, their punishment will be half that of free women.

Comment If the punishment for free women was stoning to death you could hardly have "half" of such a punishment for married slaves.

Ibn Qutayba in his *The Interpretation of Conflicting Narrations (Tawil Mukhtalif al-Hadith)* argues "The Book of Allah" mentioned in the

first hadith above refers not to the Quran but to God's ruling or imposition of an obligation.

A Bequest

Hadith The hadith is clear in saying no statutory heir may receive a bequest.

I heard the Messenger of Allah say: Allah has appointed for everyone who has a right what is due to him, and no bequest must be made to an heir. [*Abu Dawud, Book 18, Hadith 9 / Book 17, Hadith 2864*]

Quran The Quran says close relatives (who would be heirs) can and should receive bequests

[Q2:180] When death approaches one of you who leaves wealth, it is prescribed that he should make a proper bequest to parents and close relatives— a duty incumbent on those who are mindful of God.

Ibn Qutayba argues Q2:180 was abrogated by Q4:11-12, which provide detailed schemes of fixed inheritance shares.

[Q4:11] Concerning your children, God commands you that a son should have the equivalent share of two daughters. If there are only daughters, two or more should share two-thirds of the inheritance, if one, she should have half. Parents inherit a sixth each if the deceased leaves children; if he leaves no children and his parents are his sole heirs, his mother has a third, unless he has brothers, in which case she has a sixth. [In all cases, the distribution comes] after payment of any bequests or debts. You cannot know which of your parents or your children is more beneficial to you: this is a law from God, and He is all knowing, all wise.

And:

[Q4:12] You inherit half of what your wives leave, if they have no children; if they have children, you inherit a quarter. [In all cases,

the distribution comes] after payment of any bequests or debts. If you have no children, your wives' share is a quarter; if you have children, your wives get an eighth. [In all cases, the distribution comes] after payment of any bequests or debts. If a man or a woman dies leaving no children or parents, but a single brother or sister, he or she should take one-sixth of the inheritance; if there are more siblings, they share one-third between them. [In all cases, the distribution comes] after payment of any bequests or debts, with no harm done to anyone: this is a commandment from God: God is all knowing and benign to all.

Whom One May Marry

Quran The Quran specifies the women whom one may not marry and explicitly states that all other women not mentioned may lawfully be married.

[Q4:22-24] Other women are lawful to you, so long as you seek them in marriage, with gifts from your property, looking for wedlock rather than fornication.

Hadith The hadith states that a man may not marry a woman and her aunt at the same time thus adding in effect to those specified in the Quran, and negating the Quran's permission to marry any who are not specifically mentioned in the Quran.

The Prophet prohibited marrying a woman along with her paternal aunt or along with her maternal aunt. [*al-Tirmidhi, Book 11, Hadith 47 / Book 6, Hadith 1125*]

Comment In this case Ibn Qutayba says the hadith abrogates the Quran. Another explanation is the hadith is simply adding to the Quran providing the true meaning and intention.

Becoming Lame During Pilgrimage

Hadith The hadith says if you become lame or break a bone during pilgrimage you exit the state of ritual purity and are obliged to perform the pilgrimage at another time.

The Messenger of Allah said: "Whoever suffers a fracture or becomes lame then he (leaves the state of Ihram) and is required to perform another Hajj." I (Ikrimah) mentioned that to Abu Hurayra and Ibn Abbas and they said: "He told the truth." [*al-Tirmidhi, Book 9, Hadith 133 / Book 4, Hadith 940*]

Quran The Quran says one should complete the pilgrimage and if there are difficulties, do ones best.

[Q2:196] Complete the pilgrimages, major and minor, for the sake of God. If you are prevented [from doing so], then [send] whatever offering for sacrifice you can afford, and do not shave your heads until the offering has reached the place of sacrifice. If any of you is ill, or has an ailment of the scalp, he should compensate by fasting, or feeding the poor, or offering sacrifice. When you are in safety, anyone wishing to take a break between the minor pilgrimage and the major one must make whatever offering he can afford. If he lacks the means, he should fast for three days during the pilgrimage, and seven days on his return, making ten days in all. This applies to those whose household is not near the Sacred Mosque. Always be mindful of God, and be aware that He is stern in His retribution.

Comment Ibn Qutayba argues that the hadith and the Quran apply in different circumstances. The hadith applies in Mecca itself and the Quran before the pilgrim enters Mecca. That different circumstances apply when hadith and the Quran appear to clash is a popular argument.

Amputation for Theft

Quran The Quran is clear, the punishment for theft is amputation. There are no qualifications or conditions.

[Q5:38] Cut off the hands of thieves, whether they are man or woman, as punishment for what they have done - a deterrent from God: God is almighty and wise.

Hadiths A number of hadiths are equally clear or imply that amputation applies only if the stolen property is above a certain value.

The Prophet said, "The hand should be cut off for stealing something that is worth a quarter of a Dinar or more." [*al-Bukhari, Book 86, Hadith 18 / Book 81, Hadith 780*]

The hand of a thief was not cut off during the lifetime of the Prophet except for stealing something equal to a shield in value. [*al-Bukhari, Book 86, Hadith 21 / Book 81, Hadith 783*]

Allah's Messenger cut off the hand of a thief for stealing a shield that was worth three Dirhams. [*al-Bukhari, Book 86, Hadith 25 / Book 81, Hadith 787*]

And another hadith that says amputation does not apply for the theft of fruit or the pith of the palm-tree.

.... Rafi said to him: I heard the Messenger of Allah say: The hand is not to be cut off for taking fruit or the pith of the palm-tree. So Marwan gave orders to release the slave and then he was released. Abu Dawud said: Kathar means pith of the palm-tree. [*Abu Dawud, Hadith 4388 / Book 38, Hadith 4375*]

And, to set against this a hadith apparently in line with the Quran.

Allah's Apostle said, "Allah curses the thief who steals an egg (or a helmet) for which his hand is to be cut off, or steals a rope, for which his hand is to be cut off." [*al-Bukhari, Book 86, Hadith 29 / Book 81, Hadith 791*]

Comment The explanation given here by Ibn Qutayba is Allah sometimes reveals laws in stages.

A Believer is Not Killed

Hadith A hadith says no Muslim is to be killed as punishment for killing a non-believer.

.... Ali replied, it deals with The Diyya (compensation (blood money) paid by the killer to the relatives of the victim), the ransom

for the releasing of the captives from the hands of the enemies, and the law that no Muslim should be killed in Qisas (equality in punishment) for the killing of (a disbeliever). [*al-Bukhari, Book 3, Hadith 53 / Book 3, Hadith 111*]

Quran This goes against the Quran which ordains punishment should be “a life for a life”.

[Q5:45] And We ordained for them therein a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and for wounds is legal retribution. But whoever gives [up his right as] charity, it is an expiation for him. And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed - then it is those who are the wrongdoers.

Predestination

Hadith In the following hadith found in al-Bukhari the Prophet clearly states that a man’s destiny is decided for him.

.... a human being is put together in the womb of the mother in forty days, and then he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period, and then a piece of flesh for a similar period. Then Allah sends an angel who is ordered to write four things. He is ordered to write down his (i.e. the new creature's) deeds, his livelihood, his (date of) death, and whether he will be blessed or wretched (in religion). Then the soul is breathed into him. So, a man amongst you may do (good deeds till there is only a cubit between him and Paradise and then what has been written for him decides his behaviour and he starts doing (evil) deeds characteristic of the people of the (Hell) Fire. [*al-Bukhari, Book 59, Hadith 19 / Book 54, Hadith 430*]

Quran This contrasts with several Quranic verses that state man is being tested in various ways. He has the free will to do the right or the wrong thing.

[Q18:7] Behold, we have willed that all beauty on earth be a means by which We put men to a test, to see as to which of them are best in conduct.

And:

[Q67:2] who created death and life to test you [people] and reveal which of you does best - He is the Mighty, the Forgiving;

Coercion in Conversion to Islam

Hadith This hadith in Muslim unambiguously reports the Prophet's statement that he is ordered to fight non-believers until they accept Islam.

I have been ordered (by Allah) to fight against the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is Allah's Apostle, and offer the prayers perfectly and give the obligatory charity, so if they perform that, then they save their lives and property from me except for Islamic laws and then their reckoning (accounts) will be done by Allah. [*al-Bukhari, Book 2, Hadith 18 / Book 2, Hadith 25*]

It is notable the reference "they save their lives and property" makes it clear the hadith countenances violence. Jihad is a military affair.

Quran The hadith contrasts with these Quranic injunctions. These verses are clearly against the use of force to compel people to believe the Prophet's message or to make them believers.

[Q2:256] There is no compulsion in religion: true guidance has become distinct from error, so whoever rejects false gods and believes in God has grasped the firmest hand-hold, one that will never break. God is all hearing and all knowing.

And:

[Q42:48] We have not sent you [Prophet] to be their guardian: your only duty is to deliver the message. When We give man a taste of Our mercy, he rejoices in it, but if some harm befalls him on

account of what he has done with his own hands, then he is ungrateful.

And:

[Q88:21-22] So [Prophet] warn them: your only task is to give warning, you are not there to control them.

Hadiths Contradicting Hadiths

Water Defilement

Water Cannot be Defiled The people asked the Messenger of Allah: Can we perform ablution out of the well of Budaah, which is a well into which menstrual clothes, dead dogs and stinking things were thrown? He replied: Water is pure and is not defiled by anything. [*Abu Dawud, Book 1, Hadith 66 / Book 1, Hadith 66*]

Water Can be Defiled The Prophet, was asked about water (in desert country) and what is frequented by animals and wild beasts. He replied: When there is enough water to fill two pitchers, it bears no impurity. [*Abu Dawud, Book 1, Hadith 63 / Book 1, Hadith 63*]

Comment The second hadith means water can be impure, defiled. Ibn Qutayba argues the hadiths are not contradictory because the first hadith refers to large amounts of water, and in that sense it is true; you cannot defile large amounts of water. [This is late antiquity well before modern science.] It's like saying "nothing can withstand fire". It depends on the scale of the phenomenon.

Enemy Women and Children

Can Be Killed It is reported on the authority of Sa'b b. Jaththama that the Prophet of Allah, when asked about the women and children of the polytheists being killed during the night raid, said: They are from them. [*Muslim, Book 32, Hadith 30 / Book 19, Hadith 4321*]

Wrong to Kill Them It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah that a woman was found killed in one of the battles fought by the

Messenger of Allah. He disapproved of the killing of women and children. [*Muslim, Book 32, Hadith 28 / Book 19, Hadith 4319*]

Comment Ibn Qutayba says enemy women and children strictly speaking have the same legal status as enemy combatants which explains the first hadith, but killing them is bad, which accounts for the second hadith.

Disruption of Prayers

A Woman Disrupts Prayers The Messenger of Allah said: When any one of you stands for prayer and there is a thing before him equal to the back of the saddle that covers him and in case there is not before him (a thing) equal to the back of the saddle, his prayer would be cut off by (passing of an) ass, woman, and black Dog. [*Muslim, Book 4, Hadith 299 / Book 4, Hadith 1032*]

A woman, an ass and a dog disrupt the prayer, but something like the back of a saddle guards against that. [*Muslim, Book 4, Hadith 301 / Book 4, Hadith 1034*]

A Woman Does Not Disrupt Prayers There are several reports from Aisha that contradict the above.

Aisha asked: What disrupts the prayer? We said: The woman and the ass. Upon this she remarked: Is the woman an ugly animal? I lay in front of the Messenger of Allah like the bier of a corpse and he said prayer. [*Muslim, Book 4, Hadith 304 / Book 4, Hadith 1037*]

It was mentioned before Aisha that prayer is invalidated (in case of passing) of a dog, an ass and a woman (before the worshipper, when he is not screened). Upon this Aisha said: You likened us to the asses and the dogs. By Allah I saw the Messenger of Allah saying prayer while I lay on the bedstead interposing between him and the Qibla. When I felt the need, I did not like to wit to front (of the Holy Prophet) and perturb the Messenger of Allah and quietly moved out from under its (the bedstead) legs. [*Muslim, Book 4, Hadith 305 / Book 4, Hadith 1038*]

You have made us equal to the dogs and the asses, whereas I lay on the bedstead and the Messenger of Allah came there and stood in the middle of the bedstead and said prayer. I did not like to take off the quilt from me (in that state), so I moved away quietly from the front legs of the bedstead and thus came out of the quilt. [*Muslim, Book 4, Hadith 306 / Book 4, Hadith 1039*]

How to Drink

Sitting Down None of you should drink while standing; and if anyone forgets, he must vomit. [*Muslim, Book 36, Hadith 153 / Book 23, Hadith 5022*]

Standing Up I served (water of) Zamzam to Allah's Messenger, and he drank it while standing. [*Muslim, Book 36, Hadith 154 / Book 23, Hadith 5023*]

Poetry

Poetry is Bad The Prophet said, "It is better for a man to fill the inside of his body with pus than to fill it with poetry." [*al-Bukhari, Book 78, Hadith 180 / Book 73, Hadith 175*]

Poetry is Good Allah's Messenger said, "Some poetry contains wisdom." [*al-Bukhari, Book 78, Hadith 171 / Book 73, Hadith 166*]

Notes

Chapter 1

3. The estimate of an average of 94 words per hadith *matn* is made by the author using a random sample of 20 books of the 97 in al-Bukhari and all the 1885 hadiths found in those 20 books.

Chapter 2

5. Herbert Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period*, RoutledgeCurzon, 2000, Chapter 2, and Jonathan Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, Oneworld Publications, 2009, p24

Chapter 3

1. Christopher Melchert, *The Musnad of Ahmad ibn Hanbal: How It Was Composed and What Distinguishes It from the Six Books*, *Der Islam* 82 (2005) 32-5, quotes a source that indicates "*the total number of known, distinct prophetic hadith reports is scarcely 10,000*". M. M. Azami, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature* (1967), American Trust Publications, 1978, quotes early scholars who estimated there were only 4000 authentic traditions, though another scholar says "*How can it be said that this [Prophet] traditions do not reach 10,000 traditions when 4,000 Companions... have transmitted traditions from him, who associated with him for more than twenty years...*". Various modern websites that appear serious and sensible mention this range of figures. E.g., Islamic Sciences [islamicsciences.wordpress.com/2006/08/10/the-total-number-of-authentic-hadiths] and Islamic Center for Research And Academics [letmeturnthetables.com/2012/01/huge-number-hadith-bukhari.html]

Chapter 4

1. There are various versions of this hadith. For example: *Narrated Abdallah bin Al-Zubayr: I said to my father, "I do not hear from you any narration (Hadith) of Allah's Apostle as I hear (his narration) from so and so?" Al-Zubayr replied. I was always with him (the Prophet) and I heard him saying "Whoever tells a lie against me (intentionally) then (surely) let him occupy, his seat in Hellfire".* [al-Bukhari, Book 3, Hadith 49 / Book 3, Hadith 107]
2. Jonathan Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, Oneworld Publications, 2009, p69, L1516
3. Adis Duderija, *Ahadith and Politics in Early Muslim Community*, New Age Islam [www.newageislam.com/islamic-history/adis-duderija,-new-age-islam/ahadith-and-politics-in-early-muslim-community/d/7118]
4. Daniel Brown, *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p98, L1501, and Jonathan Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, Oneworld Publications, 2009, p74, L1620
5. Jonathan Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, Oneworld Publications, 2009, p79, L1677
16. Jonathan Brown, *Did the Prophet Say It or Not. The Literal, Historical, and Effective Truth of Hadiths in Early Sunnism*, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 129.2, 2009, p284
17. Ibid., p276
18. Ibid., p278

Chapter 5

1. Aisha Musa, *Hadith As Scripture: Discussions on the Authority of Prophetic Traditions in Islam*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p24
2. Ibid., p37
3. Ibid., p35

Chapter 6

1. Daniel Brown, *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p85, L1307
2. Jonathan Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, Oneworld Publications, 2009, p105, L2213
3. M. M. Azami in his book *Studies in Hadith Methodology and Literature*, 1992, p26, quotes a figure of 1236 for the number of different hadiths (*matns*) narrated by Abu Hurayra. This is taken from his M.A. thesis at the Shari'ah College, Mecca. Another thesis by Usman Ghani, University of Exeter, July 2011, *Abu Hurayra a Narrator of Hadith Revisited: An Examination into the Dichotomous Representations of an Important Figure in Hadith with special reference to Classical modes of criticism*, gives a figure of 1579 for the different hadith (*matn*) narrations by Abu Hurayra out of a total of 3838 mentions in the *Musnad* of Ibn Hanbal (164-241). The author has applied the ratio 1579/3838 to the Baqi b. Makhalad figure of 5374 which suggests 2203 different hadith (*matn*) Abu Hurayra narrations in that source.
4. Several non-academic "Quran only" websites claim most of Abu Hurayra's hadiths concern events only he witnessed. E.g. True Islam [quran-islam.org/articles/part_1/history_hadith_1_(P1148).html]. The author found one academic paper that provides figures but it is not clear how they should be interpreted. Usman Ghani's thesis, University of Exeter, July 2011, *Abu Hurayra a Narrator of Hadith Revisited: An Examination into the Dichotomous Representations of an Important Figure in Hadith with special reference to Classical modes of criticism*, provides various figures, one set showing 64% of Abu Hurayra's hadiths in the *Muwatta'* are corroborated and another, that only 37% are corroborated in the total count of Abu Hurayra's hadiths including repetitions in the canonical six plus three other famous collections.

5. G.H.A. Juynboll, *Encyclopedia of Canonical Hadith*, Brill, 2007, pp45-47
6. Jonathan Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, Oneworld Publications, 2009, p19, L465
7. Ibid., p88, L1865
8. Daniel Brown, *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p88, L1357
9. M. M. Azami, *Studies in Early Hadith Literature (1967)*, American Trust Publications, 1978, 34-60
10. Daniel Brown, *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p98, L1505
11. Muhammad Ali, *A Manual of Hadith*, Library of Alexandria, 2009, L277
12. Daniel Brown, *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p98, L1503

Chapter 7

1. Munir M. Hasan, *A Critical Analysis of Sahih Bukhari*, 2016
2. Aisha Musa, *Hadith As Scripture: Discussions on the Authority of Prophetic Traditions in Islam*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p2-3, p84
3. A good example can be found here: Review of *Authentication of Hadith – Redefining the Criteria* by Israr Ahmad Khan
[mohammedamin.com/Reviews/Authentication-of-Hadith-Redefining-the-Criteria.html]

Chapter 9

1. Herbert Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period*, RoutledgeCurzon, 2000, p9, L402
4. Herbert Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period*, RoutledgeCurzon, 2000, p12, L539

Chapter 10

3. To be consistent the figures in Table 7 are those quoted in Chapter 3 from Jonathan Brown's *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, p25, L564. Schacht quotes different figures but they give the same picture. See Schacht's *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, Oxford University Press, 1975, 1950, p22, which is the source for the figures in Table 8.
4. Scott C. Lucas, *Where are the Legal Hadith? A Study of the Musannaf of Ibn Abi Shayba*, *Islamic Law and Society* 15 (2008) 283-314

Chapter 11

4. Pavel Pavlovitch, *The Formation of the Islamic Understanding of Kalala in the Second Century AH (718-816 CE): Between Scripture and Canon*, Brill, 2015, p23

Chapter 12

1. Harald Motzki, *Dating Muslim Traditions: A Survey*, *Arabica*, 52, no. 2, 2005, pp204-253, p239
2. A concise summary of the common link possibilities is given in Andreas Goerke, *Eschatology, History and the Common Link: A Study in Methodology* [In *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*. Brill, 2003]

Chapter 13

1. Pavel Pavlovitch, *The Formation of the Islamic Understanding of Kalala in the Second Century AH (718-816 CE): Between Scripture and Canon*, Brill, 2015, p24
2. Herbert Berg, *Competing Paradigms in Islamic Origins: Qur'an 15:89-91 and the Value of Isnads* [In *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*. Brill, 2003] p260

3. Gregor Schoeler, *Charakter und Authentie der muslimischen Überlieferung über das Leben Mohammeds*, Walter de Gruyter, 1996. Translated as *The Biography of Muhammad: Nature and Authenticity*, Routledge, 2011. Harald Motzki, *Quo vadis, Hadith-Forschung? Eine kritische Untersuchung von G.H.A. Juynboll: "Nafi' the Mawla of Ibn 'Umar, and his position in Muslim Hadith Literature"*, *Der Islam* 73 (1) (1996) 40-80. Translated as *Whither Hadith Studies?* in *Analysing Muslim Traditions - Studies in Legal, Exegetical and Maghazi Hadith*, Brill, 2010
4. Herbert Berg, *The Divine Sources* [In *The Ashgate Research Companion to Islamic Law*. 2014] p37
7. Christopher Melchert, *The Early History Of Islamic Law* [In *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*. Brill, 2003] p303

Chapter 16

1. *Mass-Observation: Britain in the Second World War* [The Folio Society, 2007] compares memories of a sample of people 30 years after the war with what they recorded in their diaries at the time. "*Any relationship between the incident they had described in their diary and the story they told in 1975 was almost entirely coincidental. They got everything wrong: dates, places, the sequence of events.*"

See also: *How reliable are our memories (how close to the truth)?* [writersandeditors.com/blog.htm?post=926223] and *The fallibility of memory in judicial processes: Lessons from the past and their modern consequences*, US National Library of Medicine [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4409058/]

2. Nabia Abbot was born in Turkey in 1897. She became first professor of Oriental Studies at the University of Chicago.

Sources and Further Reading

PART 1 - THE BASICS

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